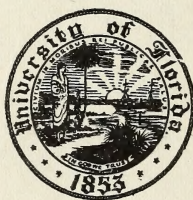






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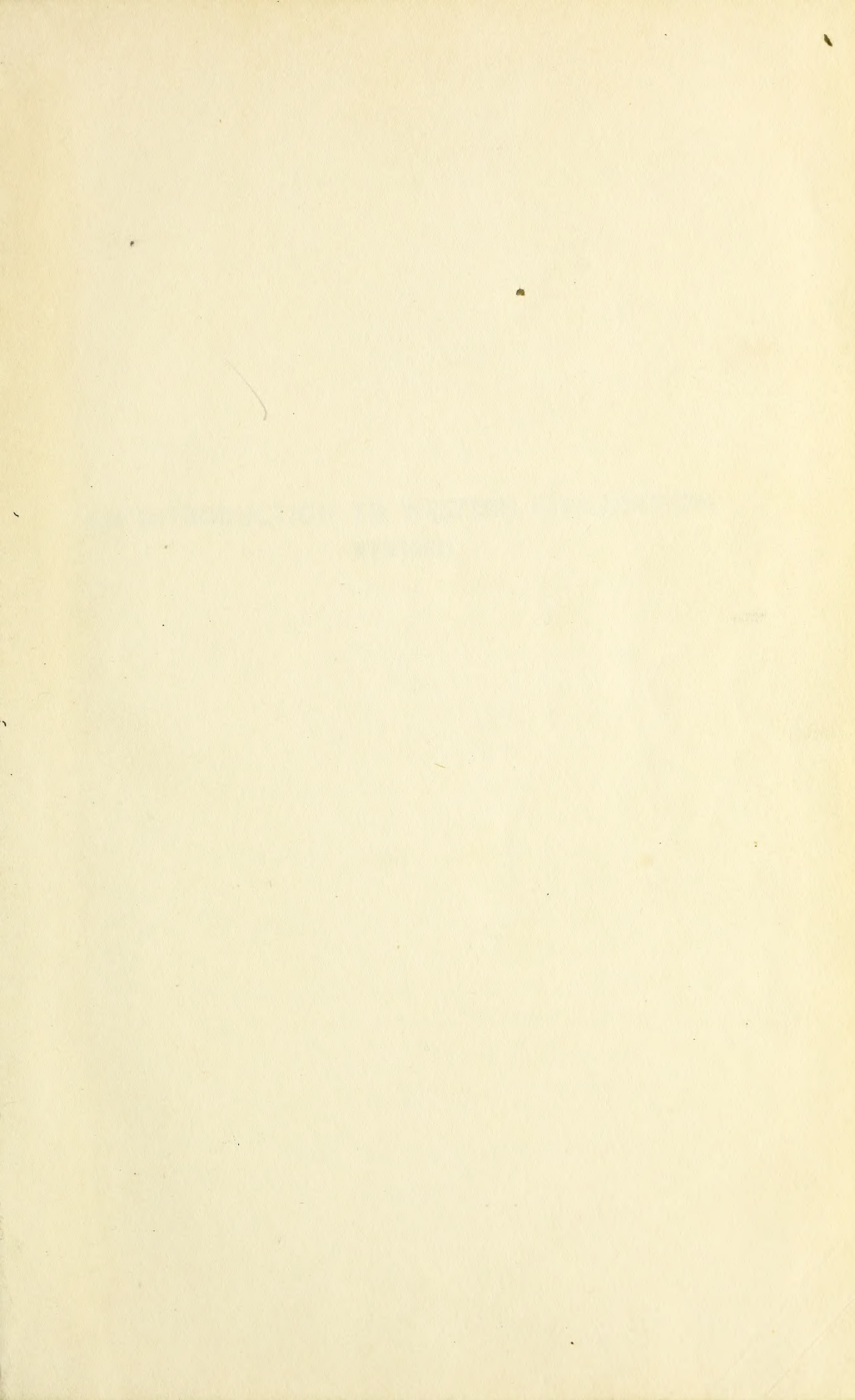


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**AN INTRODUCTION TO WESTERN CIVILIZATION,  
REVISED**



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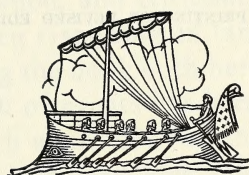
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AN INTRODUCTION TO  
**Western Civilization**  
*REVISED*

Edited by  
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NEW YORK

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## FOREWORD

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**T**HE CLASSROOM is the real testing ground of a textbook. Six years of educational experience with *An Introduction to Western Civilization* has brought to its authors the usual cargo of approval, suggestion, and criticism. The present revision of the work has been responsive in large measure to the judgments of those using the book both here at Cincinnati and elsewhere. The march of events has been even more pressing in its demands. Much water has run under the mill since 1933, when the *Introduction* was first published. Events whose significance could be seen but dimly six years ago now appear momentous in their portent for the present and the future. They have made necessary radical changes in those chapters dealing with contemporary events and problems in the fields of economics, politics, and international relations.

The revision has been thoroughgoing throughout the volume. The omission of considerable matter found in the first edition has opened the way for additions of new material designed to enrich the content of the book and enhance its value for both teacher and student. But with all the omissions and additions the original plan and organization remain unchanged. It is the conviction of the authors that the arrangement of materials, tested by results measured in terms of the educational aims originally set up, has proved its value.

For the information of those who may be using the volume for the first time we take the liberty of drawing on the preface to the first edition for a restatement of objectives. The book makes a modest attempt to correlate selected bodies of material from the social sciences. The subject matter has been prepared by men working in the fields of economics, education, geography, history, literature, political science, and sociology. The character of the work has been dictated largely by the desire to provide an adequate preparation for students who will later enter those fields for more detailed study, but in no sense is the work designed as a substitute for the special courses in the social sciences.

The authors believe that the student just entering upon his career in the liberal arts college will carry away from this introductory survey an experience valuable in several ways. It is expected that it will serve as a satisfactory gateway to the social sciences and at the same time provide a background that will promote a higher standard of work in those fields. It is expected that it will help to erase departmental lines between related subjects, and so aid the student to correlate for himself the knowledge which he receives in artificially separated fields. Since the book has been written with the authors' attention fixed constantly upon the world in which the student lives, and more particularly upon the major problems of contemporary society, it is hoped that the student will discover a vitality of relationship between his academic experiences and intelligent living in human society; for education, properly conceived, does not lift the student out of the world of realities, but is essentially an intensification of the process by which he may come more speedily to interpret and evaluate it.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, JUNE, 1939.

G. A. H.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

**A**S A RESULT of the untimely death of Professor Allen B. West, the revision of the chapters on the ancient civilizations devolved upon the editor. He is deeply indebted for assistance in the task to Professor Julius Lewy, who corrected the revised manuscript on the Near East; and to Professor Malcolm McGregor, who performed a like service in checking the manuscript on Greece and Rome. The editor assumes all responsibility for possible errors incidental to the revision. We also desire to express thanks, for valuable aid, to Professor William Crowley for material and criticism on the subject of Greek philosophy; to Professor John La Monte, who corrected the chronological table and the summary dealing with medieval civilization; to Professor Van Meter Ames, who coöperated in preparing the materials on medieval and modern art; and to Professor Hubertus Cummings, who checked the section on modern literature and made helpful criticisms. For any defects remaining in the sections mentioned the editor stands accountable. For generous assistance in the reading of proof the editor is indebted to Mr. Henry Winkler.

Throughout the volume recognition is accorded a number of individuals, publishers, and museums for permission to reprint

copyrighted materials. Especial mention should be made here of the coöperation of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Pierpont Morgan Library, the Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche (ENIT) of New York City, and the Classics Department of the University of Cincinnati in the illustration of this book.



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# **PART I**

## **PRINCIPLES AND THEORIES RELATING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION**





## INTRODUCTORY: AN APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

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**A**S THE TITLE implies, this book is devoted to a study of Western civilization, roughly the civilization which developed in Europe and later spread to other parts of the globe. The work makes no pretension to being a history. It aims to examine and analyze human culture, to reveal its constituent elements; to describe and explain the forces, human and material, that have combined to fashion and refashion it; to present the great problems arising during the critical periods of human development and the lesser problems that perpetually challenge man in his attempts to satisfy the needs of human existence. Further, the work aims to introduce the reader to certain concepts and principles together with bodies of factual matter designed to provide a foundation and a point of view highly desirable as a preparation for satisfactory performance in the later study of the social sciences.

It is admitted at the outset that in confining our study to Western civilization we are presenting a view both incomplete in its scope and prejudiced in its outlook. For we are largely ignoring the splendid contributions made to human culture by the great Oriental societies—by China, by India, by Japan, and by less conspicuous Oriental lands; and we are ignoring almost completely what has come from the native cultures of Africa, of the New World, and of the islands of

the sea. But the omission does not signify a failure to recognize a great truth with which every reader might well begin such a survey as this, the truth that civilization as we know it today is not the creation of any one people or group of peoples, or of any one time; it is the collective achievement of all peoples and of all time. So conceived, there is no such thing as an English, a French, a German, an American civilization, in the sense that any one of these nationalities created the civilization of which it boasts. The thought might well lead us to pause when we are disposed to swell overmuch with national pride at our own achievements or to look with a sense of superiority at the achievements of other lands.

Western civilization in modern times is a vast heritage from past ages. Many of the contributions enriching that heritage have come from the so-called "dead" civilizations of antiquity. So it comes about that the student of human culture must press his explorations deep into the past, far beyond the earliest written records, retracing, as best he can, the long and devious paths that man has traveled in his struggle upward from savagery to high civilization. The path backward from present civilization is not a path gradually descending from what is sometimes popularly conceived to be the incomparable heights of contemporary civilization to the low levels of the "cave man." The path leads up and down over the intervening centuries. At times it reaches peaks of achievement in certain phases of culture beyond the attainments of our modern age. But however we may evaluate the successive periods comparatively we discover that each had its creative moment of greatness as a contributor to the cultural heritage of man.

A search for the creative source in the achievement of civilization inevitably leads to a study of man himself and the evolutionary process through which he acquired distinctive attributes setting him apart from beasts as the crown of animal creation, the one creature capable of creating and using tools, and, by virtue of that fact, the one creature capable of building and transmitting civilization. Just when man distinguished himself by his first achievements in culture building, and what that primitive culture was like can never be known beyond



rough approximations, rough but highly significant and deeply absorbing in interest to those who would appreciate man's great adventure.

### CULTURES OF PREHISTORIC MAN

With the fashioning of man's first rude tools more than a hundred thousand<sup>1</sup> years ago the story of civilization begins. With man's use of tools the divergence of the human manner of living from the manner of the beast becomes accentuated. Millenniums of time pass. Man's tools become more numerous, more varied, more effective. He learns to utilize a wider variety of materials. His technique and his craftsmanship improve and are applied to more and more of the everyday operations incidental to his rude manner of life. At wide intervals great discoveries or inventions are made. Man learns to use fire, to weave cloth, to build houses, to domesticate plants and animals, to cultivate the soil. These achievements, and many more besides, mean that man is slowly equipping himself for the more successful conquest of his environment in the never-ending battle for survival. His life is becoming a bit less harsh, a bit more secure.

These thousand centuries of human effort land us near the dawn of history. Many influences combined to bring the prehistoric age to an end. Most important of all was the invention of writing. The development of the art of writing marks a climax and a turning point in the story of civilization. Prehistory gradually merges into history. A veil of mystery still hides much of the life of Stone Age man. With the accumulation of written records human culture is increasingly illumined. The laborious piecing together of these records by modern scholars has furnished the basis for what is known of the earliest historical periods of Western civilization.

### HISTORIC CIVILIZATIONS OF THE WEST

Interestingly enough, the earliest historical periods of Western civilization do not begin in the West, that is, in Europe,

<sup>1</sup>For other estimates see pp. 127 and 129, and footnotes.

but in Egypt and in southwestern Asia, the region of the ancient Near East. From the Near East the pathway of civilization leads next to ancient Greece, with its unparalleled achievements in art and thought; then to Rome, great law-giver to mankind and builder of empire. With the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West, in the early centuries of the Christian era, we enter the Middle Ages, a period of a thousand years dominated by the universal Christian church and marked by profound changes in the life of Western society. During the early Middle Ages Western Europe seemed largely to have forgotten much of the splendid contributions of the ancient world to European culture; but forces were at work, little understood at the time, destined to create an irresistible curiosity about the civilization of the ancients and a passionate desire to understand and enjoy it. These vitalizing forces of thought and feeling led to the recovery of the elements and the spirit of Classical culture. This intellectual revival reached its climax during the last three centuries of the Middle Ages. The interval is known as the Italian Renaissance. When it had run its course, by the close of the sixteenth century, Western civilization had deviated widely from its medieval prototype, and new institutional landmarks seemed to indicate that Western society had entered a new era. European civilization in its modern dress had begun its course. Its course leads straight down to our own day, the present stopping point in this long journey of mankind from the beginning of culture to the world in which we live.

The journey is marked by many events of great significance in the development of Western civilization. One series of events of transcendent importance must be mentioned here, events leading to the geographical expansion of Western culture. In the beginning, as we have seen, the high civilization from which Western civilization was derived was confined to the narrow areas of the Near East. With the Greeks an advanced civilization developed in the southeastern corner of Europe. Later when the Greeks turned to the sea they dotted the islands and the shores of the Aegean, Black, and Mediterranean seas with colonial plantings of Greek culture. In the

centuries when Greek culture was in decline, Rome, already ruling all Italy, was carrying her imperial conquests throughout the Mediterranean world. When they had come to a close, in the first centuries of the Christian Era, civilization extended from ancient Persia to the British Isles and from the northern borders of the great Sahara to the Rhine and Danube rivers. The Roman world thus became a kind of melting pot in which elements of Greek and Near Eastern civilizations were more or less fused with Roman civilization. It was this amalgamation of Oriental, Greek, and Roman cultures that formed the basis for the later civilization of Europe. With the collapse of Roman civilization in the West in the fifth century A. D. the Middle Ages begin. The Christian Church then took the place of the Roman state in Western Europe as a great civilizing agency. By the close of the medieval period Western civilization had become Christian, and had been extended practically throughout Europe. With the vast colonial and imperialist movements of the modern age the expansion of Western civilization has come to full circle. Every inhabited area of the globe has succumbed, or appears to be in process of succumbing, to the compelling power of Western civilization. As we come to understand this tremendous phenomenon we shall be made aware of its significance in the lives of all members of the world society.

### **Social institutions**

The forward march of civilization, so scantily indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, presents numberless historical facets which cannot be treated in this volume. One broad and fundamental aspect of civilization, however, is to be examined at some length; it has to do with the basic forms of social organization and institutional life. Group life means organized life; and social organization, particularly where it touches things essential for man's survival, commonly results in institutions. Institutions are social instruments, social tools, invented and developed by society to meet individual and community needs. It is through institutions that community life is made possible and desirable. Through social organization



and institutions the reciprocal relations and obligations of man to man and group to group are established and maintained. No social being can escape their intimate and irresistible impact. They pervade every corner of human existence. Their intimate relationship to the well-being of the individual and of the group becomes painfully evident when, for any reason, institutions become seriously impaired. Let government collapse and living immediately becomes difficult and chaotic. Let the delicately adjusted machinery of our economic institutions fall into disorder and men go jobless and families go hungry. Close all educational institutions and ignorance presently abounds and the whole moral tone of the community begins to sag. If the machinery painfully constructed to organize the nations on a peaceful basis becomes seriously jammed, whole societies may find themselves helplessly plunged into war. It is such considerations that make the study of social organization and institutional life of cardinal importance to one who would understand the vital workings of societies both in the past and in his own day.

### THE SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO SOCIAL STUDIES

Most of the fields of human knowledge contribute something to an understanding of the development of civilization, to the nature of society itself, its workings, its interrelationships. No fields of study, however, are more intimately bound up with these subjects than are the social sciences—economics, history, political science, sociology. We say “bound up” with these subjects, because the subjects are of the very stuff and substance with which the social sciences deal. The forces that create and modify civilizations and produce the great crises and the problems of human existence are so complicated, often so elusive, that those who would undertake a serious study of the social sciences soon discover the severe demands of such an undertaking. They are told that if they would acquire the intellectual craftsmanship demanded of the student of the social sciences they must follow the scientific procedure. Is the scientific method possible in social studies?

Let it be admitted that the social sciences, so called, are not sciences in the narrow sense, as many critics, with good reason, declare they are not; they do lack the necessary precision. But this admission does not preclude an approach in keeping with the spirit of scientific methods. James Harvey Robinson has put the matter succinctly: "Science is nothing more or less than the most accurate and best authenticated information that exists, subject to constant rectification and amplification, of man and his world. It is by no means confined to stars, chemicals, physical forces, rocks, plants, and animals, as is often assumed. There is a scientific way of looking at ourselves—our thoughts, feelings, habits, and customs; at their origin and interworkings. Science, in short, includes all the careful and critical knowledge we have about anything of which we can know something."<sup>1</sup>

### **The danger of mental biases**

This "scientific way of looking" at things lays exacting obligations on the student of the social sciences. One is the obligation to be perpetually alert to combat biased attitudes, interpretations, and conclusions. The obligation touches everyone because no one is free from irrational prejudices. Prejudices are treacherous. They creep up on us unawares. They take almost endless forms; race, nationality, geographic locality, family, social status, economic status, politics, religion, education, occupation—these are some of the sources from which they spring. They range from inconsequential mental quirks to obsessions that place the mind in a strait jacket. Their shackles are hard to break because they commonly have their roots in unexamined mental attitudes acquired early in life; some of them have been deliberately inculcated by parents, by the school, by the church, and by other organized groups. Prejudices, unrecognized and uncontrolled, tend to canalize our thinking, produce blind spots in the mental eye, or excite emotional forces that paralyze rational judgments. They may even close the mind altogether to ideas and opinions not in accord with personal preconceptions. "A closed mind,"

<sup>1</sup>James Harvey Robinson, *The Humanizing of Knowledge*, p. 57.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "is like the pupil of the eye; the more light you shed upon it the tighter it closes." A mind so conditioned is incapable of a scientific approach to the ever enlarging body of knowledge and changing concepts in the field of the social sciences. A glance at a few of our common biases will demonstrate the gravity of this problem.

*The bias of race and nationality.* There is, for example, the bias of race. Certain interpretations of history and of social phenomena have led to a rather general, unshakable conviction that a white skin is a badge of inherent superiority. The scientific evidence now available fails to justify such a conclusion, but the prejudice continues to warp the minds of millions where questions of race are involved. In our own country social problems touching whites and blacks are surcharged with emotions capable under some circumstances of being lashed into bestial fury. Miscarriages of justice, lynchings and burnings of Negroes are tragic signs of race hatred. The feeling commonly displayed toward the American Indian, the Chinese, and the Japanese is much the same, differing mainly in the degree of its intensity. In the case of the Orientals this is particularly true on the Pacific coast both in the United States and in Canada. In fact, exhibitions of race superiority in our past dealings with Japan have done much to poison friendly relations with that country. So long as such prejudices prevail in the United States and elsewhere in the world, race antagonisms will continue to fester, and to complicate the serious problems, both domestic and international, that have plagued human society through much of its history.

More disturbing to straight thinking than race prejudice is the bias of nationalism. The nation places an indelible stamp on all those born and reared under its flag. The bias of nationality presents difficulties when one comes to evaluate it, because it often displays a confusion of good and evil. On one hand it inspires in some an admirable, unselfish devotion to the genuine interests of country; on the other hand it opens the way to many for debasing self-seeking disguised as patriotism. Our interest in the bias of nationality has to do with



its influence upon clear thinking. Nationalism, as expressed in the distorted doctrines of emotional patriotism, is capable of creating a fanaticism as destructive to rational thought and action as religious fanaticism was during the period of the Inquisition. It produces a species of national egotism revealing itself in the superiority complex displayed by many in their attitudes toward "foreigners." We can discern this feeling in our own country in the popular labeling of aliens as "greasers," "wops," "frogs," "Chinks," and the like. In more serious matters it frequently inspires "national" interpretations of events, perverting truth and befuddling and poisoning the minds of uncritical readers. Since the World War its influence has grown to tragic proportions. The rise of a new form of absolutism in government, exemplified in dictatorships and the concept of the totalitarian state, has fanned nationalism into a blind fury against all minority groups who do not conform in every respect to the national ideals as conceived in the minds of the dictators. In international affairs nationalism has "fostered savage racial passion and repulsive national arrogance."<sup>1</sup> The pursuit of national interests narrowly and selfishly conceived produces bitter suspicions, fears, and antagonisms that fill peoples with uncertainty and a haunting dread of war. It is not to be wondered at that distinguished publicists should conclude that there is little hope of escaping catastrophe for civilization unless through some educational process we can create an international-mindedness capable of the conviction that the enduring interests of the nations is to be found in the interests of humanity at large.

*Political, religious, and class biases.* Political partisanship is another source of biased thinking. There are many to whom "what the party stands for" becomes a sacred tradition and a gauge of all right political thinking, to be handed down as a precious heritage from father to son. When party spirit so far takes possession of the mind, the party label practically becomes the sole factor in deciding among political leaders, platforms, policies, and measures. In such cases, political thinking in any real sense is blocked by prejudgments at the

<sup>1</sup>G. P. Gooch, *Nationalism* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1920), p. 125.

outset. A student of history and of political literature frequently needs to make allowances for the author's and his own biases, as a rifleman raises his sights and sets his wind gauge when he shoots at a distant target.

Particularly since the Reformation and the coming of modern science, religion has been a direct cause of prejudice and intolerance. Those who find support for their religious beliefs in faith and the inward movements of the spirit find themselves confronted by those who profess to believe that the only dependable test of truth is the test of scientific investigation. Religious beliefs and secular learning have never been reconciled, and the extreme proponents of orthodox religion on the one side and the extreme proponents of secular learning on the other are equally prone to succumb to intolerant and biased attitudes. Neither is in a frame of mind to recognize the legitimate claims of the other. In past centuries religion bitterly opposed the advance of science wherever it collided with religious beliefs, and in some quarters it continues to retard the application of scientific methods to the solution of certain social problems. This is especially true in the field of medical science. The wars of religion appear to be at an end, but even now sporadic cases of bitter friction between divergent religious groups come to public attention. During the nineteenth century a growing spirit of religious tolerance went far toward effecting a working adjustment between church and state. Now, religious freedom won at incalculable cost has been destroyed in some countries and is seriously threatened in others by the crushing force of dictatorships. Those who would think straight where religious controversy enters in must exercise conscious care.

Class bias takes various forms. In its economic aspects its manifestations are obvious and particularly important to us, because economic interests touch everyday life at many points and affect the most elemental wants of man. The deep rift between the propertied and the propertyless classes has been a primary source of class distinctions and class prejudices throughout history. With the industrializing of Western society in the nineteenth century the development of a strong

class consciousness among the industrial workers intensified class prejudices along economic and social lines. Between the armies of industrial workers and the capitalist employers the conflict of interests is reflected in bitter controversy and industrial war. The struggle excites latent prejudices on both sides; groups line up for and against, and in most individual cases the emotionalism of bias dominates the mind. Here certainly is a demand for all the understanding and good will that modern communities can marshal if satisfactory compromises are to be found, for the problems involved in conflicts between capital and labor are many-sided and of profound social significance.

*The counteracting of mental biases.* These few illustrations of mental bias suggest why the field of the social sciences is swept by the winds of controversy. In the face of the storm the "scientific way of looking" at things may appear impossible of attainment. Yet, objectivity is recognized as one of the basic criteria of the disciplined mind. Can the mind rid itself of the distorting influence of prejudice? Perhaps it is true that prejudices cannot be uprooted—though there are some who would reject such a conclusion; but even if they cannot be uprooted their effects can be controlled in large measure. Their effects can be controlled by those who are fully aware of their prejudices, who understand how they came by them, and who exert a strong, conscious effort to keep them blocked out as determining factors in their interpretations and judgments. In the process of judging they may discover that the factual evidence admits of more than one valid interpretation, and that in important controversial subjects justice may lie in compromise, inasmuch as rarely is all truth on one side and all error on the other. Commonly, it is the division of "just claims" between two contending points of view that makes subjects controversial. The scientific way of looking at things implies a willingness to keep the mind open to all sides, to weigh conscientiously the pertinent evidence, to draw conclusions accordingly, and at the same time to temper logic with a consideration of human nature, for logic without human understanding frequently leads to error.



The social problems discussed in the course of this work are not presented for "solution." They should, however, serve to make the student intelligently conscious of their existence and of their serious import to all who are engaged in the search for more rational and satisfactory community life. They should serve also to reveal the conflicts of opinion and interest that make their solution difficult. Most important for the student, perhaps, is that he acquire some training in sound methods of approach in dealing with the problems of society; for, after all, method, in science, is more important than the conclusions reached. The so-called social sciences, as now written, cannot claim absence of bias. Part of this emotional prejudging derives from the individual peculiarities of the author, and part from group affiliations dating from childhood; both combine to form unconscious and uncriticized attitudes. Happily, science implies criticism of results and increasing objectivity. It supplies its own medicine. The student should realize, then, that the "facts" and their interpretation in this work may, in the light of better knowledge, prove to be partial and biased; at the same time the method of approach may be sound and in harmony with the spirit of science.

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## CULTURE: ITS CHARACTERISTICS AND GROWTH

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**H**UMAN LIFE EVERYWHERE is collective; and at all times human beings associated in group life have certain basic needs and interests—material, physical, psychological, and social. This generalization applies equally to Neolithic man or modern man, Tasmanians or Turks, Australian Blackfellows or the Americans of Middletown. These fundamental needs and interests are invariably expressed in some form of culture. That is, through culture these needs are met. Thus the primitive Tasmanians were able to survive physically only because they had tools and a kind of economic organization. And contemporary Englishmen could hardly exist without their elaborate complex of technology and social organization. Culture, then, in its various phases, is the inevitable and invariable expression of man's struggle to live, to satisfy his needs and express his interests. Its importance requires that we consider its nature and characteristics in more detail.

### What is culture?

Perhaps the most famous definition is that of Tylor, an English scholar. He described culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society." Dixon, an American authority, says, "The



term 'culture' has come to be used by anthropologists, sociologists, and others as a designation for that totality of a people's products and activities, social and religious order, customs and beliefs which, in the case of the more advanced, we have been accustomed to call their civilization." As Dixon implies, not all cultures justify the name "civilization." Generally this word is reserved for those cultures characterized by writing, more or less elaborate technology, complex social and political structure, large measure of control over the physical environment, and wide influence. Such were the cultures of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and most of the cultures of Asia and Europe. (Many of the simpler cultures of the past and the present are referred to as primitive or preliterate.) But whether simple or elaborate there is fair uniformity among students of culture as to its meaning. Generally, it is discussed as a complex of techniques, technologies, customs, organizations, institutions, ideas, and values.<sup>1</sup> It is assumed that this complex is a heritage from the past, that it is transmitted successively through the generations of men, and that it is communicated from individual to individual and from group to group. Were we to describe our own culture, consideration would have to be given to our techniques and machinery, our methods of making a living, our play-habits, etiquette, social ritual, our political institutions, family organization, morals, religion, art, literature, our theories, theologies, and values.

The nature of culture may be made clearer by the analysis of some of its more significant characteristics.

(Culture is apparently unique to man.) It appears that man alone of the higher animals possesses language; thinks and expresses abstract thoughts; has customs, traditions, and institutions; elaborates and rationalizes his fears and hopes in terms of morals, ideals, and religion; and transmits his experience and knowledge of all these things to others of his

<sup>1</sup>Wissler has described culture simply as "the mode of life followed by the community or tribe . . .", while Lowie describes it even more briefly as "the whole of social tradition." W. I. Thomas in a recent volume has used the term culture "to represent the material and social values of any group of people"—in which he includes institutions, customs, attitudes, and behavior reactions.

kind. Some writers believe that the anthropoid apes, man's animal cousins, do have an elementary social heritage.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, these anthropoid cousins of ours are apparently incapable of abstract thought, have no language, and lack our efficiency and skill in acquiring and transmitting experience and patterns of behavior. While man may not be unique as a culture builder, he is supreme in the quality of his accomplishment.

✓ (Culture is universal.) No people known, past or present, is culturally naked. A people's culture may be rude, as that of early man, or simple, as that of the Veddas of eastern Ceylon, or highly elaborate and complex, as that of modern Europeans; but everywhere and at all times it has been a constant fact in the human world. Romantic souls, sick of the restrictions, "artificiality," or complexity of life in civilized society, have often talked and dreamed of the free, simple life among "nature" peoples, where restrictive customs and repressive institutions were believed to be absent. But the student can find no such children of nature. Men everywhere have been and are children of culture. Apparently, some form of culture is the inevitable and universal expression of human life. ✓ It is the indispensable medium of human existence.

Not only is culture universal, but possibly cultures everywhere conform to what Wissler has termed a universal culture pattern or scheme.<sup>2</sup> (Cultures radically diverse display, on closer examination, essentially similar elements. Thus no greater contrast could be imagined than that between the culture of the pygmy Semang of the Malay Peninsula forest and that of western Europe. Differences in the details of these cultures make Semang and western Europeans total strangers. Yet both have tools, economic organization, language, marriage, family organization, morality, religion, and ideals of right conduct. The Pondo of southeast Africa and the citizens of Kalamazoo appear to be poles apart culturally. Nevertheless tools, techniques, and organized economic activities

<sup>1</sup>See Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (The D. Appleton-Century Company, 1937), Chap. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture* (Thomas Y. Crowell, 1923), Chap. 5.

sustain both groups. In both cases the sex mores, marriage, and the family provide for the sex needs and facilitate reproduction and child rearing. Both peoples have definite ideas about such matters as the status of women, desirable mates, correct behavior, and the supreme values. Apparently, cultures do tend to conform to a common scheme or pattern.

If this be the case, it should be possible to discover these essential elements in the pattern. And in recent years the attempt has been made by a number of students. (Wissler has recognized nine fundamental features of culture: speech, material traits, art, mythologies and scientific knowledge, religious practices, family and social systems, property, government, and war.<sup>1</sup>) Under each of these nine heads he assembles the specific items belonging to that class. The important thing is not a given scheme, but the fact that culture does apparently everywhere tend to possess common elements. We may quarrel with the details of a given classification. For example, some students have insisted that war is not universal, although given a place in Wissler's scheme. However, war tends to be universal. Isolated simpler peoples lack any except the barest rudiments of political structure, but the people utterly lacking political organization are so few that it is practically accurate to say that political institutions are universal. Perhaps no scheme or classification could fit the details of every culture, for the content of cultures is too complicated and diversified.

The student, however, is not asked to accept a given classification of the basic elements of culture, but to investigate the idea. The concept of a universal culture pattern does seem to have great utility. Thus it introduces order into the elements of culture. Culture traits are seen as aspects of culture complexes, and the latter as phases of a culture scheme or pattern. For example, in our culture, giving an engagement ring is a trait in the complex of courtship which in turn is an aspect of marriage, a universal pattern. By using the culture pattern idea we are enabled to reduce culture to its common denominators. Furthermore, the idea indicates the basic kinship

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<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 74.



of all cultures. Finally, the hypothesis suggests, though it by no means proves, that human needs and interests tend everywhere to be the same, inspiring the development of certain universal institutions and patterns of life.

### VARIATIONS IN CULTURES

While all cultures serve essentially the same purposes and apparently conform to a more or less common scheme or pattern, no two cultures are ever identical in the details of form or content. Thus, the census taker of the world's cultures finds numerous major cultures which he recognizes as types. A given region of any extent usually presents varying types of culture. We would probably assume that all Indian cultures are alike. Yet Wissler has isolated nine types for the Indians of the United States and Canada alone. Students of Africa, Asia, and the Pacific region are able to distinguish a variety of cultures within each of these areas. The trained eye can always detect these variations, and even the casual observer can note the grosser differences.<sup>1</sup>

In considering specific phases of culture, one may observe many variations. Thus in economic organization is found everything from the hunting Bushmen of South Africa to the complicated, large-scale, machine production of modern Europe and the United States. In political structure certain tribes of Eskimos and some of the pygmy groups of Malaysia, practically without political organization, stand at one end of the scale, with political leviathan such as Great Britain, Russia, and the United States at the other. Religious institutions and beliefs display a similar variety. We have Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islamism, Confucianism, Shintoism, hundreds of so-called "primitive" religions, as well as many varieties of each of the great "world" religions. Apparently there are many roads to salvation.

We are perhaps inclined to think that in such important matters as marriage, the family, and sex morals there would be

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<sup>1</sup>The region in which a given type of culture is found is frequently referred to as a culture area. Obviously this idea is more applicable to simple, isolated cultures than to complex cultures such as our own.

uniformity. But variety obtains here too. Marriage forms range from "group" marriage, polygyny, and polyandry, to the monogamy familiar in our own society. Customs defining the relationships of wife and husband, child and parent, modes of mate selection, and the methods of dissolving marriage are perplexingly varied. Anyone convinced that there is only one right system of sex morals will be disturbed by the bewildering variety of customs and practices relative to sex behavior: the Veddas of Ceylon glorify premarital chastity; many others, like the Samoans and some of the Melanesian and African tribes, regard premarital sex freedom as essential, and see nothing "immoral" about it.

This prodigal diversity in the details of culture is further evident in the variety of dietary customs, social ritual, and norms defining good taste. Consider, for example, the astounding contrasts in the matter of food. We like dogs as pets but abhor them as food, while, as one writer reports, the Zumperi of western Africa breed dogs for food.<sup>1</sup> We may eat venison when it is "high" or cheese when "ripe," but can hardly understand the taste of certain tribes of northern Nigeria who enjoy meat green with putrefaction. Soup is an approved item on the American menu, but our taste buds would be outraged by the Kagoro variety, a concoction of boiled rats, mice, and bats seasoned with millet ash. Milk rates high among our foods, but at one time the entire eastern Asiatic world, inclusive of China, Japan, Indo-China, and Malaysia, regarded milk with deep aversion. Cannibalistic people have often wondered at the strange objection of the civilized to the eating of human flesh. The meat-eating Moslem of India does not appreciate the dietary qualms of his Hindu neighbor, while the Hindu hurls the epithet "cow-eater" at his Moslem compatriot.

(It is clear from this discussion of the variability of culture that the norms and definitions of behavior of no one culture win universal acceptance.) (Right and wrong are relative to time and place, custom and culture. The sanctions of a cul-

<sup>1</sup>W. D. Hamblly, *Ethnology of Africa* (The Field Museum of Natural History, 1930), p. 46.

ture are valid only for those people organized in terms of that culture. Nudity is all right for the Shilluk male of eastern Africa but the American mores do not allow such "indecentencies." Christianity is "right" for Christians but not necessarily so for Taoists. Head-hunting is "wrong" for Americans but not for the Nagas of Assam; nor does the existence of polygyny among Melanesians and Moslems give it sanction among the Danes and the Dutch.

### Cultural biases

One of the inevitable by-products of this variability in human cultures is the development of cultural biases; or, to use Sumner's somewhat clumsy word, ethnocentrism. Each culture group, being in a measure isolated from all others and living in terms of its own culture, tends to assume that its way of life is superior and that its manners and morals are "natural" and good. Other groups appear barbarous. Their customs are regarded as strange, queer, perhaps "immoral" and "unnatural." The old-fashioned missionaries, for example, were invariably shocked in the presence of nudity, polygamy, premarital sex freedom, and the magical and religious practices of certain peoples of Asia, Africa, and the Pacific islands. What they saw convinced them that these people needed "salvation"—that is, needed to adopt the culture of the missionaries. No people, simple or civilized, is apparently free from this reaction of cultural bias. Eskimos have it as do Americans. To each of the great nations of the past, its own achievements and culture have seemed superior to those of any other. The tendency on the part of peoples to assume uniqueness is apparently universal. In the modern world of the West and increasingly in the East, cultural biases take political form. Perhaps the core of nationalism and patriotism is a cultural bias. Certainly the sense of cultural differences aids and abets nationalistic sentiments.

Cultural biases vary in intensity from group to group and from person to person. The more isolated groups, with less experience of alien peoples, naturally are "narrower" in their reaction to strange folk and ways. Persons whose contacts



are varied will be more tolerant of alien peoples, though not necessarily free from bias. Generally speaking, reading, travel, and diverse contacts extend the horizons of one's appreciation of cultural variations; to such, alien folk become "human." It is difficult for a person growing up in one culture to realize that the standards of that culture are relative, that good taste, conceptions of right and wrong, and "best" institutions reflect specific judgments. Fielding's parson in *Tom Jones* said that when he spoke of religion he meant the Christian religion, and when he spoke of the Christian religion he meant the Protestant religion, and when he spoke of the Protestant religion he meant the religion of the Established Church. Perhaps to the great mass of mankind ways other than their own are regarded as spurious. It should be clear to the student that judging a people from the angle of one's own culture is misjudgment. Seeing a people in terms of its own culture is the only way adequately to understand that people. Admittedly, this is a difficult feat, and few there are who accomplish it.

#### **How culture is inculcated**

The rigidity with which the individual commonly holds to his cultural biases is partially explained when we examine the process by which he acquires his culture. It is an obvious yet important fact that the members of every society provide for the transmission and perpetuation of their particular variety of culture. Briefly, three factors operate to this end: day by day contacts and experiences, casual, informal, and usually unplanned; specific teaching and instruction; and social pressures, effected through such devices as censure, ostracism, and punishment. Daily participation in a given culture and the give and take of life in a particular society make easy, inevitable, and "natural" the acceptance and assimilation of a culture by the great majority of persons. The individual is born into a world he never made; and through his daily experiences in that world he acquires its codes, ways, beliefs, and values. He naturally absorbs the elements of the social heritage necessary to existence in the world of which he is a part. But the

people of no society leave the serious problem of inculcating the cultural heritage to the chance of daily experience, or to the unpredictable drift of informal contacts. Rather, every culture provides techniques and agencies for the specific instruction and training of the young in the approved ways of life. The native of Liberia no less than the child of Germany is taught how to speak, how to utilize the accumulated skills and wisdom, how to act, and what to think. Every society provides teachers, be they parents, priests, or professors, whose duty it is to indoctrinate the citizens of tomorrow with the cultural heritage of today. In case, however, the routine of informal contacts and the agencies of instruction fail to habituate the individual to the ways, practices, and ideas of a given culture, recourse may be had to such devices as ridicule, gossip, social ostracism, or even death. Coercion may be and sometimes is used in forcing the individual to accept or to conform to the rules, norms, and ideas of a culture. These and other factors serve to induct the individual into a culture. Men everywhere manifest, in their acts and lives, the distinctive stamp of the culture to which they are heir; and which they in turn transmit to their children.

### HOW CULTURES GROW AND CHANGE

In the beginning of this chapter it was suggested that culture is transmitted from generation to generation. It is not the product of any given group, generation, or time. Individuals die, even groups disappear; but culture seems immortal. This is not to say that every specific culture is continuous. Cultures do wax and wane and ostensibly disappear. But culture as a whole, beginning with prehistoric man, perhaps a hundred thousand years ago, has had a more or less continuous history. The decay of a specific culture has never meant the death knell of culture. The main stream has flowed on. The continuity of culture, implying the linkage of the past with the present and the dependence of any given generation upon a cultural inheritance from the past, is a fact of primary importance in understanding the growth or develop-

ment of culture. Culture is prior to the individuals of a given generation; and each generation is heir to a culture, which it may alter or modify but which it cannot escape. Individuals, either unwittingly or as a result of deliberate teaching, make the culture in which they grow up their own and in turn transmit it to oncoming generations. In this way history is made and cultural continuity is assured.

The fact of cultural continuity does not mean that each generation receives a culture which it dutifully transmits to the next. Cultures are never wholly static. No generation of Bushmen, Chinese, or Americans makes a perfect copy of its cultural heritage. With the passing of time all cultures show signs of change. Some cultures change slowly, as, for example, among the isolated "backward" peoples; and in all cultures the basic institutions, such as economic organization, marriage, the family, and religion, seem to resist radical transformation. But in no culture does time stand still for long. In our day especially cultures that change slowly are decreasing in number. With the world-wide sweep of mechanical means of production, transportation, and communication, and the propelling force of common ideas and beliefs, cultures everywhere are "on the move." No people in the modern world is able successfully to resist these pressures toward change.

How do we explain culture change? No answer to this question can be more than partial or tentative, since culture change is a complicated problem. Nevertheless, a brief formulation of what appear to be the more important factors will be of value. Broadly speaking, two factors suggest themselves, invention and diffusion.

### **Invention and culture change**

Inventions occur in every culture. An invention may either represent a radical departure from a particular aspect of culture, as was the case of the steam engine, the power loom, the automobile, the aeroplane, or the Soviet system of government and economic organization in Russia; or it may represent but a slight addition to the culture heritage. For example, possibly only a few of the 1,330,000 patents issued in the



United States during the first third of this century represented basic innovations. Inventions are not merely limited to the technological aspect of culture, though the most striking and possibly the most significant ones do occur in this realm. There are inventions in science, medicine, economic organization, and government. Possibly we might think of the city-manager form of municipal government, the parole system, juvenile courts, Esperanto, and the League of Nations as types of social inventions.

Inventions are always related to a cultural background, or to what Ogburn has termed a culture base. They are inspired and in a sense produced by a given culture. Under certain circumstances inventions are perhaps inevitable. For example, the Industrial Revolution inevitably released thousands of inventions. In our own society discoveries and inventions in the fields of technology, medicine, science, and even social organization are to be expected. Hundreds of people, sometimes independently, work on the same problems; they share the same culture and respond to the same "drifts" and urges.<sup>1</sup> The individual does of course play a role in invention. But without a proper cultural medium the potential inventor remains unproductive. Even a Watt could not have invented the steam engine had he grown up among the American Indians. Fulton among the Hottentots or an Edison or Marconi growing up among New Guinea cannibals might have excelled in some lines, but hardly as the inventor of steamships, phonographs, or wireless.

Clearly inventions vary as to their significance. Some transform a given culture; others effect few or no changes. For example, a new method of wrapping chewing gum is of little significance; but there can be no doubt about the great significance of writing, the alphabet, pottery making, the sailing ship, the steamship, the locomotive, the automobile, the aeroplane, the telephone, wireless, the radio, and the motion pic-

<sup>1</sup>Ogburn has analyzed this tendency for the same inventions to be made more or less simultaneously. He has compiled a list of such inventions. See *Social Change* (The Viking Press, 1927), pp. 90-102. Bernhard Stern has collected a similar list in his *Social Factors in Medical Progress* (Columbia University Press, 1927).

ture; or the importance of vaccination and preventive medicine; or democracy, nationalism, and the new economic and social organization of Soviet Russia. These and many other discoveries and inventions have been epochal in the life of humanity.<sup>1</sup>

### Diffusion and culture change

The second factor in culture change is diffusion. Diffusion refers to the process by which one culture absorbs items from another culture. Probably it is the basic factor in culture change. Culture does not change easily without contact with other cultures. Contact excites change; it promotes invention and stimulates new ideas and techniques. The culture of Japan changed slowly over a long period of time until the late nineteenth century, when broad contacts with the West began. Once linked with the Western influences, Japanese culture underwent a rapid and radical modification. The sweeping changes now in process in the cultures of Asia and Africa may likewise be explained in terms of contacts with Western peoples. Most of the peoples of the world today are involved in numerous economic, political, and social contacts, which probably explains the dynamic, somewhat confused, rapidly changing nature of the world's cultures.

Diffusion has been a constant factor in culture change. It has operated throughout history. The Greeks borrowed much of their culture from the Near East. The Romans borrowed from the Greeks; and the culture of Rome in turn was scattered throughout its vast empire. The early settlers in the United States borrowed certain items of culture from the Indians, such as place names, the cultivation of maize, corn, and tobacco, and foods like hominy and succotash. In fact, this principle of diffusion has operated so extensively

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<sup>1</sup>Inventions are not always received gladly. In fact, the history of inventions is replete with resistance even to the type of invention that would seem to fit the need of the time. Stagecoaches, railways, streetcars, automobiles, printing, typewriters, steam engines, and aeroplanes are only a few of the long list of opposed inventions. The reasons for opposing inventions are various—the inertia of old habits, the threat to vested interests, and the fear that new inventions will disturb the *status quo*.

during the hundred thousand years or more of culture that no people can lay claim to a culture that is original to itself. All peoples have borrowed. And if any culture of our day were stripped of its "alien" elements, probably there would be little left. Linton, for instance, suggests that possibly no existing culture today owes more than 10 per cent of its total elements to inventions made by members of its own society. He gives an amusing sketch of the solid American citizen who awakens in a bed built on a pattern originating in the Near East; slips into moccasins, invented by the Indians of the Eastern Woodland; goes to the bathroom for his shave, "a masochistic rite which seems to have been derived from either Sumer or ancient Egypt"; after dressing and eating his breakfast he settles back to smoke, an American Indian habit, and "while smoking he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites upon a material invented in China by a process invented in Germany. As he absorbs the accounts of foreign trouble he will, if he is a good conservative citizen, thank a Hebrew deity in an Indo-European language that he is 100 per cent American."<sup>1</sup>

### Resistance to culture change

From the foregoing, contacts between cultures appear to be a primary factor in culture change, since contacts, direct or indirect, are essential to diffusion. But it does not invariably follow that contact between peoples means diffusion of cultural items. There may be contact without diffusion. Christian missionaries have been decidedly unsuccessful in Moslem countries. Their religion does not seem to "take" in these lands. Western culture is sweeping the world; but there are peoples resisting it. In fact, at no time does a people denude itself of its traditional culture and automatically absorb another diffusing culture. The degree to which diffusing traits are incorporated into a culture depends upon certain conditions, which tend to vary.

For one thing, the borrowing culture must be psychologically ready for change. China is now open to Western influ-

<sup>1</sup>Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man*, p. 327.



ence, but less than a hundred years ago it was hostile. Having been incorporated in a world society where Western culture is in vogue and has prestige and utility, the Chinese are now naturally eager to take over certain elements of Western culture. At the present time Americans are generally hostile to the Communistic system of Russia. The mind-set is against it, and elements of Communistic culture, if we may so characterize it, have little chance of diffusing in this country. With changes in our economic conditions, however, a more favorable reaction to Communism may conceivably develop.

The prestige and utility of the diffusing culture have much to do with its acceptance. For example, the African cultures have little chance for diffusion in Europe. They lack utility and prestige. On the other hand, European cultures, having the kind of utility that the age demands and possessing prestige as well, do spread to Africa. Perhaps Western culture is diffusing so extensively at present, not because it can claim an ultimate superiority, but because in the world as organized now it has greater utility than any other culture. Moreover, it is the culture of the conquering, imperialistic nations of our day, and hence all peoples must come to terms with it.

Even where diffusion does occur, the accepted item of culture does not necessarily remain unchanged. What usually happens is that it is modified, "naturalized" in keeping with the new culture setting. Thus Japanese or Chinese Christianity is not the Christianity of the American missionary. Even today the Catholicism of the Mexican Indian is in some cases more "pagan" than Catholic. Any culture item introduced into a new culture will be transformed to some extent. Diffusion, then, is never a mere mechanical process. Accepted alien elements are stamped more or less with the "native" character.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Not all alien culture elements are equally acceptable. For example, the African peoples wear European clothes and use European tools, but cling to their traditional mores. Apparently the material phases of a donor culture win readier acceptance than the institutional and intangible elements. Possibly these phases tend universally to change more slowly. Undoubtedly, they are more difficult to communicate to another people. A tool diffuses more easily than monogamy; or the technique of writing than the values and ideals of Christianity.

### The "culture base" and culture change

In this discussion of culture change, passing reference has been made to certain social phenomena related to the process. Attention was called to the fact that societies frequently resist the influx of new cultural items, and that the type of significant inventions possible in a given society is conditioned by the character of the culture of that society at any given time. These facts call for further attention, for they exemplify a principle of great importance in any explanation of the advance of civilization.

The principle may be presented in the following terms: The continuity of culture through the ages signifies the dependence of each generation on its cultural ancestors. Any given generation of men is indebted to the past for the accumulated cultural capital it possesses, an inventory of which includes, as we have seen, tools and technology, ideas and techniques, skills and knowledge, ideals and values, organizations and institutions. This heritage represents what has been termed the *culture base*, and in a real sense is the source and basis of each generation's activities and accomplishments. In a fundamental sense, therefore, the *culture base* is a conditioning factor in the subsequent development of any culture or civilization. The truth of this statement may be indicated by citing a few of many possible illustrations.

As we have seen, the rate of change in culture is partially determined by inventions and technological innovations. Now powerful prevailing beliefs and interests—integral parts of the culture base—may either stimulate or discourage innovations, or motivate or balk their utilization. During the Middle Ages, for example, the otherworldliness of European society and the compelling conviction that mere man should not meddle in God's plan for the world undoubtedly discouraged inventiveness and the kind of adventuresomeness that leads to important discoveries. In contrast, modern civilization places a high premium upon material comfort and mechanical development, and science, the great innovator, has great prestige. The result is a remarkable aptitude and cre-

ativeness in science, technology, and the world of things. The man of the Middle Ages was not different from the man of today as to species, fundamental capacity, or human nature. What medieval man did not have in common with modern man was the same kind of culture base; and this difference makes them radically different in ideas and behavior.

The principle may be illustrated in another way. We have seen that cultural diffusion is a powerful agent in the advance of civilization. Now the devices and technology of a culture base serve either to restrict or to stimulate cultural diffusion and thus become a factor in further culture growth. For instance, the relatively static character of the cultures of so-called primitive peoples results partly from their lack of transportation and communication facilities. Or, consider the culture changes taking place in the "Unchanging East." Those changes are largely by-products of the introduction of the railway, the steamship, the telephone, the international cables, and the radio.

One more example should suffice to clarify the role of the culture base in the development of civilization. Let us examine the relation of the state of the industrial arts to the use and control of the physical environment. Obviously, the degree of mastery and utilization of nature is an important factor in the advance of culture. Contrast the history of the Indian and of the white man in North America. The Indian lacked the necessary tools and techniques to utilize effectively the resources of the continent. Moreover, the state of his culture was such as to require only such resources as plant and animal life and limited areas of the more fertile lands. On the other hand, the white man, with his rich heritage of science and technology, and with his ideas of material comfort and social progress, utilized and transformed the environment of the continent in a fashion not possible to the Indian. Because of the character of his culture base, and, what is very important, his sustained relations with European peoples and civilization, the odds greatly favored the white man; and he won.

These several illustrations all point to the conclusion which



we wish to emphasize, namely, that the culture base from which a people starts determines in large measure both the direction and the distance of their travel along the high road of civilization.

### SOME SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF CULTURE CHANGE

One who observes culture change soon notes striking contrasts in the speed with which changes are occurring in different parts of the world today. In the main, the cultures of the West are changing rapidly; those of the East and Africa more slowly. But if one compares the present with the past, contemporary cultures the world over are seen to be in the grip of comparatively rapid changes. Even the remotest and most isolated areas of the earth are now undergoing significant modifications. Never before has this process of culture change operated upon a scale so universal. This accounts, perhaps, for the confusion, conflicts, disorganization, movements, and problems evident everywhere in the modern world.

Possibly the problems of a changing culture are made more severe because of the tendency for change to occur more rapidly in certain aspects of culture than in others. Ogburn and other students have emphasized the interdependence of the various phases of culture. It is maintained, for example, that marriage, the family, government, education, religion, social attitudes, and social institutions generally are vitally related to technology, science, and material conditions. There may be rapid changes in technology, new and important inventions and significant changes in material conditions, while the ideas and institutions—the “adaptive culture”—lag behind. For example, local government as an institution probably changes less rapidly than factors to which it is related or adapted, such as methods of transportation and communication, population growth and distribution, and changes in economic life. Social legislation lags behind economic need. Science and technology are usually in advance of economic ideas, social theories, or political beliefs. Life conditions are likely to alter more rapidly than customs, morals, and ideals.

This inertia of the "adaptive culture" in a relatively static culture probably has no serious consequences. But during periods of rapid change this tendency contributes to social maladjustments, and adds to the general confusion.

These rapid changes in culture, accompanied as they are by "culture lags," carry with them social consequences of significance both to society and to the individual. Under these conditions old controls lose their potency. New controls are difficult to establish. Maladjustments emerge, expressed in social problems of many sorts—political, economic, religious, and moral. The people as a whole become restless, confused, disturbed. Naturally, under these circumstances life is not easy for the individual. There are many "proposed roads to freedom," but he does not know which to take. The very inconsistency of standards makes for confusion and inconsistency of conduct. All sorts of gospels, programs, and movements emerge to offer solutions for the ills of a changing society. But none can guarantee certitude and security. No better illustration of this perplexed condition can be found than that presented in the world today.

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## THE BEGINNINGS OF MAN AND HIS EVOLUTION<sup>1</sup>

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**I**N THE PRECEDING DISCUSSION of culture, attention was called to the fact that culture is unique to man. At this point our attention is shifted from man's culture to man himself. What qualities does he possess that account for his remarkable aptitudes as a creator of civilizations? The question can be most satisfactorily answered as we come to understand man as a product of biological evolution. This statement will become clear as the matter is elaborated in this and the following chapter; but first of all we must know what is meant by biological evolution.

### **The emergence of life on earth**

Among the countless worlds that constitute the physical universe, our planet Earth is the seat of the only life that we know anything about. In the course of the evolution of life man appeared; and in the course of the development of human society cultures began, of which our own civilization today is a lineal descendant. We do not know how and when life appeared upon the earth, for its first forms were of such a character as to leave no trace even had there been no sweep-

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<sup>1</sup>Appreciative acknowledgment is made to the following members of the University of Cincinnati faculty for their assistance in the preparation of this chapter: George B. Barbour, Gustav Carlson, and Kenneth Caster.

ing geological changes to erase them. Many theories have been put forward,<sup>1</sup> but in the end we arrive at the conclusion stated by Thomas Huxley after years of devoted study: "Looking back through the prodigious vista of the past, I find no record of the commencement of life, and therefore I am devoid of any means of forming a definite conclusion as to the conditions of its appearance."<sup>2</sup>

What is life? Its very nature eludes us, and the biologists themselves do not define it. All we are able to say at the present time is that when matter exhibits certain characteristics we consider it to be "alive." Most important of those which differentiate it from the nonliving are:

1. Capacity to take nourishment.
2. Capacity to transform that nourishment internally into its own substance.
3. Capacity for growth as a result of nourishment.
4. Capacity to undergo inner molecular change while retaining external structural form.
5. Capacity for self-movement.
6. Capacity to receive and respond to external stimuli.
7. Capacity for reproduction.

But these criteria do not suffice in all cases. While they may serve as practical tests of difference between organic and inorganic matter, biologists are no longer willing to accept them as final. The belief is growing among them that the difference is one of degree rather than of kind. Certain substances ordinarily regarded as inorganic are now found to possess some of the characteristics here listed; and others ordinarily regarded as organic seem to lack some of them.<sup>3</sup>

Wherever and however it began, life's earliest forms seem

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<sup>1</sup>For a concise summary of leading theories see *The Evolution of the Earth* (Yale Sigma Xi Lectures for 1916-1917), Chap. 3. "The Origin of Life," by L. L. Woodruff.

<sup>2</sup>Presidential address before the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1870. See *The Scientific Memoirs of Huxley*, III, 586.

<sup>3</sup>For good specific examples as well as general discussion of this, see "The Mind of the Molecule" by Professor Clifford Farr, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March 1923.

to have required conditions of warmth, light, and abundant moisture, with little fluctuation of temperature. Life probably began in a tropical climate where gentle tides flowed and ebbed on flat mud beaches. Some of these early organisms, living unnumbered centuries ago, have left their record in the rocks in the form of fossil remains. The record is fragmentary and incomplete at best, for geologic processes have themselves created gaps in the story of the development of organic life on the earth. But long and patient study has enabled the scientist to reconstruct the history of ancient life, and for convenience of study to differentiate five major geological periods, a division based upon important changes in the character of life in each period. Chart I (pp. 38-39) indicates how organisms have passed from the simplest forms characteristic of the oldest geologic era to man, who appears in the most recent.

### Organic evolution

As we look about us today we recognize that the earth is filled with multitudinous forms of life. Biologists have counted almost a million different species in the vegetable and animal world, not including a much greater number of subdivisions. What is the explanation of this great variety? The theory which prevailed in a prescientific age was that of an individual creation for each and every form, coupled with the idea that all forms had been present from the beginning. Space forbids going into a detailed discussion of the difficulties presented by this point of view; it is enough to point out that in the records of the rocks we find abundant evidence of the former existence of many species, notably reptiles, that are now extinct; and that we recognize many present forms previously nonexistent.

Not only is there this striking multiplication of species in the course of the development of organic life through the geological periods, but a study of fossils reveals the further highly significant fact of the emergence of progressively higher forms of life from one geological period to another. When we say "higher" we refer to the increasing complexity of bodily



# CHART I. SEQUENCES IN THE EMERGENCE OF LIFE, BY GEOLOGICAL ERAS<sup>1</sup>

## A. CRYPTOZOIC EON ("Hidden Life")

### I. ARCHEOZOIC ERA

(550 millions of years)

Life probably present, but evidences meager. No hard parts present.

### II. PROTEROZOIC ERA

(900 millions of years)

Life evidenced chiefly by indirect fossils (i.e. in iron ore, graphite, limestone, etc.).

Invertebrate animal life, chiefly characterized by absence of hard parts.

Primitive plant life; presumably algae.

## B. PHANEROZOIC EON ("Revealed Life")

### III. PALEOZOIC ERA

(368 millions of years)

PERIOD	RECORD OF LIFE
	<i>Invertebrate Dominance</i>
1. Cambrian	First appearance of known marine animals. Abundant invertebrates of nearly all animals having fossils due to hard parts. Dominance of trilobites, marine snails, worms, sponges, jellyfish, possibly chordates. Marine plants.
2. Ordovician	First appearance of chordates. Greatest development of trilobites; dominance of cephalopods. Corals; mollusks; moss animals. Plants presumably creeping out on land.
3. Silurian	First appearance of true fishes and scorpions. Coral reefs. Decline of trilobites. Mosslike land plants.
4. Devonian ("Age of fishes")	First appearance of woody plants, later developing into extensive forests. Appearance of seed plants, but spore plants dominant. Abundant fish life of higher forms; sharks; lung-fish invading fresh waters.
5. Mississippian	First appearance of amphibians. Rise of sharks.
6. Pennsylvanian	First appearance of reptiles, and of insects. Highest point of amphibians. Greatest coal deposits.
7. Permian	Rise of reptiles, and of insects. Decline and disappearance of much Paleozoic life. (Glaciation.)

## IV. MESOZOIC ERA

(125 millions of years)

PERIOD	RECORD OF LIFE
	<i>Reptile Dominance</i>
1. Triassic	First appearance of mammals from reptile stock. Rise of dinosaurs as ruling reptiles. Abundance of ammonites, and of gymnosperm forests.
2. Jurassic	First appearance of toothed birds, and of flying reptiles. Increase of dinosaurs and of sea reptiles.
3. Comanchian (Lower creta- ceous)	First appearance of flowering plants (angiosperms). Increase of toothed birds, and of flying reptiles. Certain dinosaurs become largest land animals so far known.
4. Cretaceous	Increase of early mammals. Decline and disappearance of dinosaurs, and of other forms of Mesozoic life.

## V. CENOZOIC ERA

(60 millions of years)

PERIOD	RECORD OF LIFE
	<i>Mammal Dominance, Culminating in Man</i>
1. Eocene	First appearance of modern mammals. Disappearance of archaic mammals.
2. Oligocene	First appearance of early primates, including "structural ancestors" of man and other anthropoids.
3. Miocene	Rise of primates. Highest point of mammals.
4. Pliocene (Tertiary)	First appearance of higher anthropoids, including apemen, probable ancestors of modern man. Decline of many mammalian lines.
5. Pleistocene (Quaternary)	First appearance of <i>Homo</i> , true human stock, accompanied by artifacts. (Wide curtailment of life, due to glaciation.)
6. Holocene (Recent)	First appearance, growing into dominance, of <i>Homo sapiens</i> , the species of which present-day races are a part. From this point on, human differences are cultural rather than biological.

<sup>1</sup>The time-estimates given here are chiefly of value as an indication of the relative proportions of the several eras. They are based on the calculations of A. F. Kovarik and Arthur Holmes, derived from the radio-active disintegration of certain metals. While this is the most satisfactory estimate yet employed, estimates vary as much as 30 per cent even on these. (For the data underlying these estimates see National Research Council Bulletin No. 80, June, 1931: *The Age of the Earth*. A brief summary of this is given by Raymond C. Moore: *Historical Geology*, 1933, page 52.)

structure, the development of specialized organs and senses, the appearance of a more efficient and highly developed nervous system, and, above all, an ascending scale of intelligence.

Struck by these facts, men have for a long time sought to explain the phenomena. From ancient times on they have speculated concerning the possibility of establishing a definite line of descent. During the first half of the nineteenth century, a conviction arose that there was a causal sequence between lower and higher forms of life, the whole representing a progressive development. Charles Darwin in his *Origin of Species* (1859) gave the names of thirty-four writers who had definitely put forward an idea of an organic series whereby the present forms of life have developed from lower ones, and those from forms still lower, and so on back to the first living organisms to appear on our planet. *Organic evolution* is the term used to designate this developmental process. J. Arthur Thomson has expressed the idea clearly: viz., "that the plants and animals around us are the result of natural processes of growth and change working throughout unthinkably long ages; that the forms we see are the lineal descendants of ancestors on the whole somewhat simpler; that these are the lineal descendants from . . . simpler forms, and so on, backwards, until we lose our clues . . . in the mist of life's beginnings. The essentially simple idea is that the present is the child of the past and the parent of the future."<sup>1</sup>

What is the nature of the evidence supporting this belief? We shall present some of its important aspects.

## EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ORGANIC EVOLUTION

### Evidence from paleontology

First might be mentioned the evidence from the rocks, the story of the development of life as it is recorded in the fossil remains of ancient living things. In many parts of the world one can pick up any number of stones containing the fossil remains of a variety of mollusks, coral, and other forms of marine life. These offer convincing evidence that such regions

<sup>1</sup>*Heredity* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, second edition, 1913), p. 12



were once a part of the ocean bed, populated with myriad forms of simple life. Similarly, abundant records of many other species of organic life are left in the stones in all parts of the globe. In Arizona are found imbedded in what was once soft clay the footprints of huge reptiles no longer existent; in northern China the ivory carvers use as their materials the tusks of giant mastodons which have been buried for thousands of years in the frozen soil of Siberia; preserved in the heart of Los Angeles are the bones of thousands of extinct creatures—saber-toothed tigers, prehistoric elephants, camels, and others—trapped in the treacherous fluid asphalt quagmires of long ago.

Now the significant thing is that the older the geological strata in which these forms are preserved, the lower and more elementary is the type of life that is found; and the more recent these strata are, the higher are its forms of life. Taken as a whole, they present a series of ascending forms of life culminating in those most akin to man. There are gaps in the series, to be sure, but successive discoveries have enabled the geologist to present a story sufficiently complete to indicate the emergence of an increasing number of species progressively developing into higher forms as the unnumbered ages pass. (See Chart I.)

### **Evidence from morphology**

Morphology affords further evidence in its comparative study of the form and structure of organisms. When the naturalist makes such a study he is struck by the close resemblances which exist among plants or animals of the same class. There are likenesses in the bony structure, the muscles, the organs, or other parts, and in the proportions and positions of parts. Such similarities become evident when one examines the structure of the hand of a man, the wing of a bird or a bat, the hand of a mole, and the leg of a horse; or such organs as the heart and the lungs. The biologist convincingly explains such resemblances on the basis of common descent of homologous forms of life.

If we look upon paleontology as a vertical exhibit of a series

of ascending forms of life, we may find in the existence of present-day animal forms a horizontal exhibit of the same thing. Beginning with protozoa, the lowest forms of one-celled life, the scientist finds it possible to arrange a display of steadily ascending gradations, with the exception of recognized vacancies, clear up to the highest of all, the backboneed animals known as *vertebrata*. In the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, such an exhibit has been set up in the form of a tree whose branches as they go higher up and more distant from the ground, increasingly spread out into smaller limbs and twigs, each of which corresponds to a higher order of life. Protozoa, sponges, jellyfish, worms, and fish successively appear, each upon a separate level. These are not to be regarded as descendants of each other, but rather as differentiations, various degrees removed from some parent stem. Within the diagram which the biologists have worked out there are many gaps, some of which we may never be able to fill, but all in all we cannot doubt that beneath the series as a whole there is a progressive structural unity corresponding to the various stages of development.

### **Evidence from embryology**

Embryology affords a third line of support. A speeded-up moving picture of what takes place in an egg during the three weeks in which the mother-hen is waiting for it to hatch would reveal the following: First, the familiar egg substance, the yolk possessing a microscopic point—its germ of life—but with no properties visibly related to life itself; after a few days a fish-like animal would begin to appear with gills and long tail; this would be followed by a proportionate shortening of the tail and the bulging of four leg-like projections, the whole creature at this stage representing a lizard; a few days more and the two front projections would form into wings, the rear into legs, the gills gradually disappearing. A similar thing is true of every other creature. Neither chicken, nor dog, nor horse, nor man takes its characteristic form at the beginning, but each of them passes through a fish and reptile stage before birth. It is as if the animal relived in its own

body in the brief span preceding birth the stages that its ancestors took generations to live through in their own evolution.

A comparative study of embryos reveals the striking and significant fact that the closer the natural relation between the forms of life examined, the longer do the embryonic transformations run parallel to each other in the course of their development. Thus, the embryos of a dog and a rabbit exhibit a certain parallelism in their metamorphoses during a longer period of their development than do the embryos of a dog and a bird; and the embryos of a man and an ape exhibit a longer period of parallelism than the embryos of a man and a dog. In fact, in the case of animals that most closely resemble each other in adult life, there is a most striking similarity of structure and form until the last stages in their embryonic life, when the divergences begin which differentiate them after birth. Such phenomena point to the conclusion that there is a continuity of physical development of all forms of life. Pointing to the same conclusion is the fact that a study of the embryo reveals the presence of many rudimentary and undeveloped structures, which formerly existed in a more highly developed state in some lower species; for example, the embryonic chicken gill mentioned above refers back to the perfected and necessary gill possessed during the more elementary fish stage.

### **Evidence from experimentation**

Actual experimentation in the selective breeding of animals and the propagation of new varieties of plants has made a valuable contribution in support of evolution. Obviously there could have been no development of one species from another unless protoplasm, which is the basic substance of the animal or vegetable cell, possessed the capacity for change; that is, unless it were plastic. Such plasticity is clearly demonstrated in the successful performance of breeders and horticulturists in the creation of new varieties, and even of species, in animals and plants.

By selective breeding wide varieties of domestic animals have been produced. Thus the existing varieties of pigeons



have been derived from the common rock pigeon by a process of selecting and mating specimens in which variations from parent stock have occurred. In like manner the various domestic breeds of swine were derived from the wild hog. In the field of horticulture Luther Burbank was an outstanding genius. By artificial selection he developed chestnut bushes which bear fine nuts six months after the seed is planted, plums without stones, cacti without spines, walnuts with thin shells, calla lilies which give perfume, "plumcots" crossed from plums and apricots, and, from a single "seed ball," twenty-three potato plants so different as to constitute almost separate species. In such demonstrations as these we have an exhibit of evolution and transmutation actually in process.

### The evolution of the horse

Because of the difficulty of finding complete records, it is not to be expected that the evolution of any particular animal can be unerringly traced in an unbroken line from its early beginnings. The horse, however, is a fairly clear example. Our first geological records show him in the Eocene period, an *eohippus*, no larger than a small dog. He is a browsing animal, with his fore limbs slender and definitely lengthened, but having four toes on the front feet and three on the rear, with vestigial toes still present. In the Oligocene period, he appears as the *mesohippus*, larger, longer limbed, with teeth better adapted to browsing. At this time, both front and rear feet have three toes actually functioning with the vestigial toes still more reduced. In the Miocene period, we find him as *hipparion*, still larger, on whose foot the central toe alone is used, the side toes being mere vestigial appendages. From this point on, the side toes gradually diminish until we arrive at the modern horse with a single toe, or hoof, on each foot, bare traces being visible of the smaller toes which he formerly used. (See Chart II.)

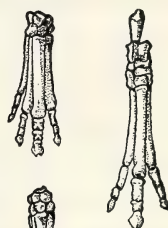
Such are some of the chief points of evidence upon which the belief in organic evolution is based. Its illuminating effect upon the understanding of life processes and their develop-

## CHART II. EVOLUTION OF THE HORSE

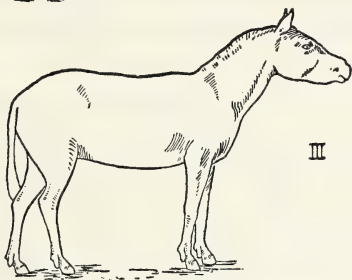
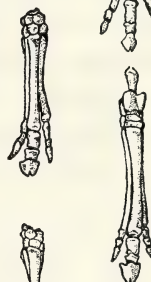
(Drawn to scale and based on actual skeletons)



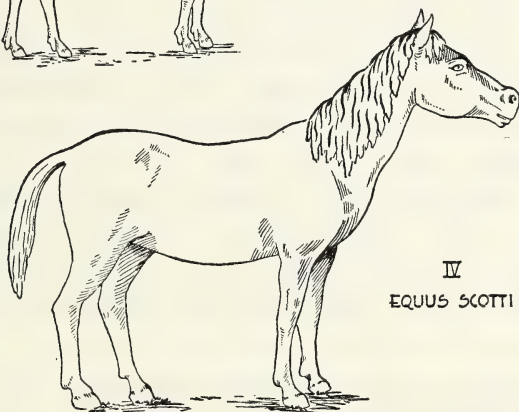
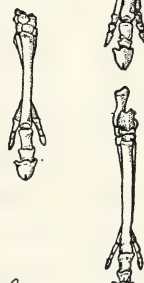
I EOHIPPUS



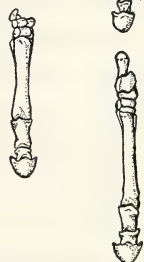
II MESOHIPPUS



III HIPPARION



IV  
EQUUS SCOTTI



FORE FOOT      REAR FOOT

**I EOHIPPUS (EARLY EOCENE):** "DAWN HORSE."  
 SIZE: APPROXIMATELY THAT OF A SHEPHERD DOG.  
 FORE FOOT: 4 TOES, OF NEARLY SAME SIZE,  
                   GREAT TOE DISAPPEARING.  
 REAR FOOT: 5 TOES, LARGEST ONE IN CENTER.  
 MUZZLE: SHORT; EYES MIDWAY BETWEEN  
                   NOSE AND EARS.

**II MESOHIPPUS (OLIGOCENE):** "MIDDLE HORSE."  
 SIZE: APPROXIMATELY THAT OF A SHEEP.  
 FORE FOOT: 3 TOES, CENTRAL ONE MUCH EN-  
                   LARGED, TWO LATERAL TOES VERY SLENDER.  
 REAR FOOT: 3 TOES, WITH TWO LATERAL TOES  
                   STILL FURTHER REDUCED.  
 MUZZLE: LONGER, WITH NIPPING TEETH  
                   BECOMING DEVELOPED FOR GRAZING.

**III HIPPARION (LATE MIOCENE AND EARLY PLEISTOCENE)**  
 SIZE: THAT OF A SMALL PONY.  
 FORE FOOT: TWO LATERAL TOES STILL FURTHER  
                   REDUCED, WITH CENTRAL TOE BEARING  
                   ENTIRE WEIGHT.  
 MUZZLE: STILL LONGER, AND APPROACHING  
                   PRESENT EQUINE SHAPE.

**IV EQUUS SCOTTI (PLEISTOCENE AND  
 CONTEMPORARY):** PRESENT-DAY SCOTCH PONY.  
 FORE FOOT AND REAR FOOT: BOTH REDUCED  
                   TO SINGLE TOE.

ment, and its utility as a guide to further study, have placed evolution among the greatest discoveries of modern science. For this reason the appearance of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, advancing a solid scientific basis for the theory, must be regarded as one of the most significant steps in the development of man's comprehension of his universe. Although it must for the present continue to be regarded as a theory rather than as an absolutely demonstrated fact, its supporting evidence is so great that scientists almost universally accept it. All the facts of life so far discovered support it; nothing discovered so far invalidates it; and it furnishes the scientist with his most practicable and valuable working principle in the pursuit of the science of life and living things.

Does the doctrine of organic evolution also apply to man, or does he occupy a unique position in the matter of his biological history? Charles Darwin has answered the question in striking language in his *Descent of Man*, which appeared in 1871: "Man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his godlike intellect, which has penetrated into the movement and constitution of the solar system—with all these exalted powers—man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin." The "indelible stamp" of man's organic continuity with other animals is revealed by essentially the same kind of evidence as that supporting the evolution of the other animals.

### EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE THEORY OF THE EVOLUTION OF MAN

Man comes into the world by the same processes of generation and birth as do the other animals: both grow by means of nourishment derived from food; both require protection from the forces of nature, including the germs that are ready to attack them and produce disease at any point of weakness; both reach maturity, mate with others of their kind, and reproduce their own species; and in the course of time the bodily structure of both becomes unable to resist the strain of nature,



decline sets in, and finally, death terminates their life cycle. The evidence of morphology applies as emphatically to man as to other species. Embryology affords an even more convincing demonstration. Moreover, in the fossil remains of subhuman creatures and of prehistoric man science presents the evidence linking man with the lower animals. Hence the biologist finds no difficulty in assigning man to his proper place in the classification of animal life. Man is a vertebrate along with other vertebrates; a mammal among other mammals; a primate along with four families of monkeys and apes. He belongs to the genus *Homo*, and his species is *sapiens*; and of both genus and species he is the sole representative.

### Relation of man to the apes

According to this classification the order to which man and existing life most similar to him belong is that of the primates, which includes apes and kindred species. The likeness between man and the apes is not a superficial resemblance merely. Scientists present several lines of evidence of their interrelation. First, there is a structural similarity. The anatomical resemblance between man and apes is so close that every bone, muscle, and nerve in the one has its counterpart in the other. The parallelism continues to minute details. With the exception of difference in brain and in vocal mechanism, to be referred to later (p. 70), there is no organic difference between them which is functionally important. Some naturalists go so far as to assert that the resemblance continues even into the mental processes and that the difference between the mind of man and of animals is only one of degree and not of fundamental nature.<sup>1</sup> Vestigial structures present a second line of evidence. Something like three hundred muscles and other structural elements have been identified in the human body which perform no function at all at the present time, but which correspond precisely to structural parts still in use among subhuman primates. Examples of these are the embryonic third eyelid surviving in the inner upper corner of the eye, and the

<sup>1</sup>See George J. Romanes, *Mental Evolution in Animals and Mental Evolution in Man* (D. Appleton-Century Co.).

muscles used for moving the ear. The prenatal development of the embryo in man and in the apes reveals a striking parallelism down almost to the last stages. Finally, there is a close resemblance in the biological life-organization and in the physical functioning of both. There are even certain diseases, such as tuberculosis, to which both are susceptible.

The close resemblance of man to the lower primates has led to the rather widespread popular misconception that evolution means that man is a direct descendant of the monkey. The teaching of science, however, is not that man is descended from the apes, but that both ape and man are descended from a common source. Our conception of man's lineage should begin with the idea of some remote structural ancestor a million or more years ago, which was neither man nor monkey, but which was possessed of ancestral antecedents characteristic of both. At some point a split in the stock occurred which resulted in the development of an anthropoid line, leading on the one hand to the orang, and on the other to the gorilla and chimpanzee—the main stem continuing upward, not as man (*Homo*), however, but as manlike creatures (*Hominidae*), whose posterity eventually became present-day man—*Homo sapiens*.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the resemblance of man to the ape should not blind one to the obvious fact that in the course of his evolution he has become so far differentiated from his simian cousins as to occupy a pinnacle position in the animal world, a matter which will receive detailed attention in the following chapter.

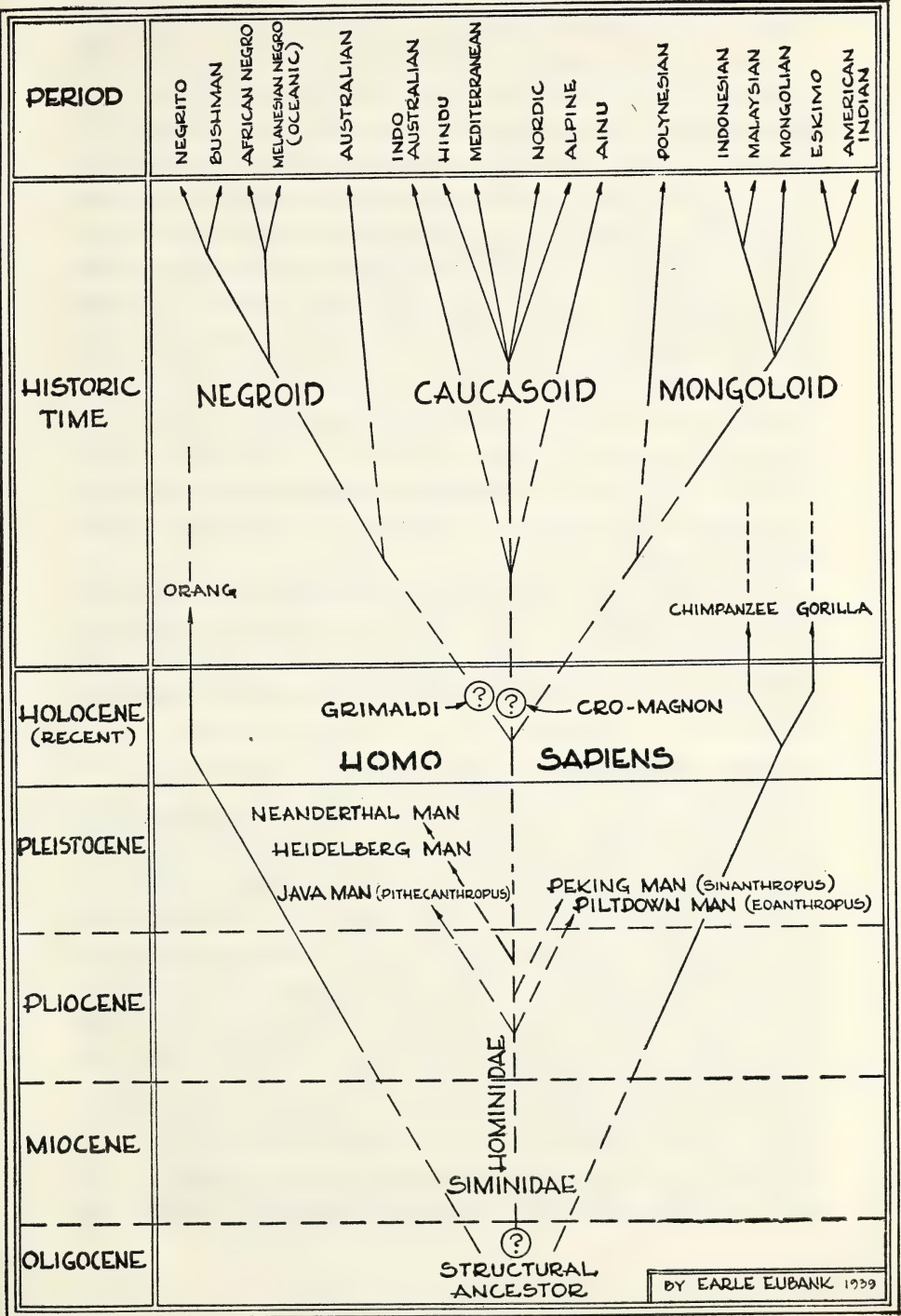
### THE FOSSIL REMAINS OF MAN'S ANTECEDENTS

If man has descended from pre-existing forms of animal life and is most closely related to the anthropoid apes, it is pertinent to inquire whether it has been possible to find any "links" between the human and the subhuman. A partial answer is revealed by the discovery of certain fossil remains. The reconstruction of prehuman lineage is especially difficult for the reason that man's body is not adapted to fossilization, as are the bodies of animals having shells or hard outer coverings

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<sup>1</sup>See Chart III.

CHART III. A FORMALIZED SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE  
 DESCENT OF MAN AND HIS MAIN ETHNIC DIVISIONS  
 (Not drawn to scale)





which leave an impression in materials that afterwards solidify. We are wholly dependent for physical evidence upon accidental circumstances which have caused occasional bits of skeleton to be buried in geological strata, or to be sheltered in caves or other places protected from the disintegrating influence of weather. Slowly, however, a piece at a time, fragments are coming to light of prehistoric manlike creatures. These are gradually being set up in chronological series. How are we able to establish their age or their place in geological succession? Simply by identifying them with the age of the geological strata in which they are found. For example, if we should find fragments of dishes, tools, and furniture in an old cellar under the debris of a house whose ruins had not been disturbed since the Civil War, we should, of course, know that these remains date back at least to the Civil War period. Similarly, when we find human bones embedded in a characteristic geological formation, we are sure that they belong to that geological period.

In the following paragraphs, we shall present a summary of the more important of modern man's predecessors, so far as we have present knowledge, recognizing that subsequent discoveries may necessitate revision of our present interpretations.

#### **Java Man (*Pithecanthropus erectus*; also known as Trinil Man)**

Near the village of Trinil in central Java, fragments of one of the earliest, if not the earliest, of man's prehuman antecedents were discovered in 1890 by Eugene Dubois. These remains included the top of a skull, three teeth, a portion of a jawbone, and a left thighbone, all in such close proximity as to be regarded by most authorities as belonging to the same individual. Judged by the geological deposits in which these were found, this particular individual is believed to have lived during the lower Pleistocene, and may therefore date back a hundred thousand years, or more. In the immediate vicinity and in the same stratum were found the bones of twenty other kinds of mammals, all of which have long been extinct. The teeth of *Pithecanthropus* are characteristically manlike; the

straightness of the leg bone indicates habitual erect posture; and the size of the skull cavity indicates a brain capacity decidedly above that of any known ape, and approaching that of man. These factors led its discoverer to regard it as a distinct intermediate species, an erect-walking manlike ape, which he named to indicate that fact—(Pithecos—ape; anthropos—man.) Its characteristics indicate that it is a branch of our central main stem of Hominidae. (See Chart III.) No accompanying cultural remains of any kind were found with it. Excavations in this same region in 1936 brought to light small stone artifacts, but their discoverer, G. H. R. von Koenigswald, writes “we are forced to conclude that our Javanese implements . . . are much too advanced for as primitive a being as *Pithecanthropus*.”<sup>1</sup>

### Peking Man (*Sinanthropus pekingensis*)

The name Peking Man, which has repeatedly appeared in the headlines during recent years, represents another significant link in the quest for man's forbears. The discovery was made near Peking in 1929 by W. C. Pei, a Chinese paleontologist. The original find, which consisted of an almost complete skull brain case, has been supplemented by numerous subsequent discoveries until, by 1938, fragments of no fewer than two dozen separate skeletons had been recovered. Several skulls, many teeth, and other skeletal parts reveal close anatomical relationship to the human family of today. The early Pleistocene location places him as approximately contemporary with *Pithecanthropus*, though probably of a different species. However, the thing that has led G. Elliott Smith and other outstanding scholars to regard Peking Man as marking a new epoch in human paleontology is the unmistakable fact that he was a maker and user of artifacts, which definitely establishes his relation to the human family. More than two thousand of these have been found, fashioned from bone as well as stone, comprising both tools and weapons; and numerous char-

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<sup>1</sup>In a paper presented at the International Symposium of the Academy of Natural Science, Philadelphia, March 1937. See G. G. MacCurdy, editor, *Early Man* (J. B. Lippincott Company, 1937), p. 29.

coal remains, scattered through deposits of more than twenty feet thickness, mark this species clearly as users of fire. "In other words, *Sinanthropus* was already man—close to the main line of descent leading to modern man—and was able to organize his life so as to select intelligently the materials useful for fuel, weapons, and tools, besides being a successful hunter of animals."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Franz Weidenreich, one of our most competent students of *Sinanthropus*, believes that Peking Man "occupies the lowest place in the order of all hominids in regard to those peculiarities which determine its position in the line of evolution," that he is an even earlier form than *Pithecanthropus*. He also advances the belief, disputed by others, that Peking Man may have been in the ancestral line of some of the present-day Mongol groups.<sup>2</sup>

If the hypotheses concerning Peking Man stand the test of further examination and subsequent evidence, the discovery will prove to be exceedingly significant; it will push back the dawn of culture to a far earlier period than that accepted for the beginnings of culture in Europe, which is placed as at least 100,000 years B. C. Peking Man has apparently given us the most adequate basis yet for tracing man's ancestry to a past far more remote than that accepted hitherto.

### Heidelberg Man (*Homo heidelbergensis*)

The only part of Heidelberg Man so far discovered is a well-preserved lower jawbone, containing sixteen teeth—the famous Heidelberg Jaw—which was found in 1907 near the old German university town, about eighty feet deep in well-stratified river gravels. The geological layer to which it belongs, one which contains the remains of the woolly rhinoceros, the mammoth, and other preglacial mammals now extinct, indicates that it, too, belongs to the early Pleistocene, possibly as far back as the First Interglacial period. The jaw is huge and apelike,

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Schuchert and Carl O. Dunbar, *Historical Geology* (John Wiley and Sons, revised edition, 1933), p. 482.

<sup>2</sup>Franz Weidenreich, "The New Discovery of Three Skulls of *Sinanthropus Pekingensis*," *Nature*, Vol. 139 (Feb. 13, 1937).



CHART IV. SEQUENCES IN THE PREHISTORY OF MAN AS FOUND IN EUROPE  
(Not drawn to scale)

ESTIMATED TIME CHRONOLOGY	GEOLOGICAL PERIODS	CULTURAL SEQUENCE		PRE-HUMAN AND HUMAN SEQUENCE
		CULTURAL AGE	ARTIFACTS ( FIRST APPEARANCE )	
4,000	HOLOCENE (RECENT)	AGE OF METAL	CRUCIBLE, MOULD, HAMMER, FILE ANVIL, PUNCH SCYTHE, SICKLE SAFETY PIN HAND MILL PLOUGH POTTER'S WHEEL WHEEL AND AXLE	PRESENT-DAY RACES  MONGOLOID CAUCASOID NEGROID
10,000		NEOLITHIC	DOMESTICATION OF PLANTS (AGRICULTURE) DOMESTICATION OF ANIMALS POLISHED STONE IMPLEMENTS TEXTILE ARTS { SPINNING WEAVING NETTING ARTIFICIAL DWELLINGS MEGALITHIC MONUMENTS HEWN AXE BOW AND ARROW POTTERY	
	PLEISTOCENE (QUATERNARY)	STONE ( UPPER )	FIRE - MAKING STONE LAMP CAVE ART AND BONE-CARVING PRESSURE FLAKING BONE-USING: HARPOON NEEDLE SPEAR THROWER	CRO-MAGNON:  BRÜNN GRIMALDI PREDMOST, ETC.
		PALEOLITHIC ( LOWER )	FIRE - USING FLINT CORES AND FLAKES USED FOR TOOLS . COUP DE POING PERCUSSION FLAKING	
100,000	PLIOCENE (TERTIARY)	EOLITHIC	IMPLEMENT-MAKING: EOLITHS	HOMINIDAE  NEANDERTHAL MAN  HEIDELBERG MAN  PEKING MAN (ASIA) (SINANTHROPUS) JAVA MAN (ASIA) (PITHECANTHROPUS) PILTDOWN MAN (EOANTHROPUS)
500,000			IMPLEMENT-USING: NATURAL FLINTS	
By EARLE EUBANK 1939				

but the teeth clearly belong to the human species, though apparently a type different from any other known to us.

### **Pitldown Man (Eoanthropus; Dawn Man)**

A fourth discovery of approximately the same period as the three already listed was unearthed in a gravel pit a few feet below the surface, near Pitldown, Sussex, England, in 1912. These physical remains are also far from complete—nine pieces of a single skull, and less than half of a lower jaw with teeth, originally found some distance away, but which, after much careful study, has been accepted as belonging to the same body. The jawbone is less human than the Heidelberg jaw, but the teeth are akin to those of races existing today. This curious combination of characteristics of both man and ape has led to much controversy over his place in the line of evolution, some authorities placing him before, and others subsequent to, Heidelberg Man. The question of his place is further complicated by the fact that in Great Britain, where he was found, there are no remains of anthropoid apes. Although the gravel deposits where the bones reposed are ascribed to the Third Interglacial period, the associated mammal fossils indicate that they may go back to the First Glacial period of the lower Pleistocene, and may have been washed out into the later stratum. If the shattered skull has been correctly reconstructed, it indicates a brain capacity in excess of both Java Man and Peking Man, but below that of modern man.

Many other fragments of fossil man which are of lesser significance or whose character is too uncertain to receive attention here have been found, among which the Rhodesian Man of South Africa is notable. With archeological excavation proceeding apace in many parts of the world, we may confidently expect additional data at any time.

### **Neanderthal Man**

The earliest species to show relatively abundant signs of genuinely human-like culture is Neanderthal Man, named from the original skeleton found in 1856 in the Neanderthal, a val-

ley near the Rhine. Since that date a number of Neanderthal skeletons have been found through central and western Europe and in parts of Asia, so that we have a fairly clear picture of him. R. S. Lull describes him as "of low stature, hardly exceeding five feet three inches for the males and less for the females. The posture was not fully erect but was probably no less erect than that of some slouching modern types. . . . The skeleton . . . points to a clumsy, shuffling, loose-jointed being of great muscular power. . . . The head was borne on the immensely muscular neck in such a way that the face was thrust forward in an apelike manner." Although the brain capacity of the skull was approximately an eighth greater than that of modern man, there was underdevelopment in the parts devoted to the higher mental functions. "Nevertheless, Neanderthal Man was a skilled worker in flints, had harnessed fire, and [gave] reverential burial to his dead, surrounded by beautifully wrought objects whose surrender implied a very real sacrifice on the part of the survivors." This also points to a religious belief, as well as to some capacity for speech and social life.<sup>1</sup>

Neanderthal Man as a race is completely extinct. Many conflicting ideas concerning his place in our ancestry have been advanced. Some regard him as definitely "ancestral to modern man, representing the Pleistocene stage in human evolution." Others regard him as a divergent branch of the human stem which had retained "an unusual share of apelike traits." Sir Arthur Keith, who is perhaps the outstanding authority, regards him as "a separate and peculiar species of man" which died out during or soon after the Fourth Glacial period, some forty or fifty thousand years ago.

### **The emergence of true man**

The brief sketch that has been given above indicates how limited is our information concerning the forerunners of modern man. The material itself is exceedingly scanty and does not permit a detailed history of the past, yet it is highly im-

<sup>1</sup>Yale Sigma Xi Lectures (Yale University Press, 1929), "The Evolution of Earth and Man," pp. 171-175.



portant, for these bits of evidence are milestones indicative of the nature and length of the journey the human race has traveled. The first four described above are probably neither descendants of each other nor direct ancestors of modern man, but are instead representative of various branchings from the main stem of Hominidae; and we are justified in regarding them as indicative of various biological phases in the evolution of modern man. All of them are associated with periods antedating the termination of the Fourth Glacial period, in the Upper Pleistocene. (See Chart III, p. 49.)

### **Homo sapiens**

Not until the postglacial period do we come to true man in the modern sense. The outstanding representative among the first true men is the Cro-Magnon race, of which many skeletal remains have been found in various parts of Europe. They are associated with the Upper Paleolithic period, extending back thirty or forty thousand years. Physically they are among the finest human specimens known, the men averaging a little above six feet in height (the women smaller in proportion) and having a larger brain cavity than modern man. In general shape, the skull, face, and brain have the characteristics of modern Caucasian men, and except for difference in size there is probably no important biological differentiation from modern races. They have left remarkable evidence of artistic skill in sculpture and in painting in the caves of northern Spain. There seems to have been an overlapping of Cro-Magnon and Neanderthal, but there is no evidence of intermarriage, and the extinction of the latter may have been due to the superiority of the former.

Apparently contemporary with the Cro-Magnon is another type of the Upper Paleolithic man known as Grimaldi, whose features have been regarded by certain authorities as Negroid. While their remains are found in France, the theory has been advanced that they are a north African type which for a time may have invaded Europe. Still another type found in central Europe is known as the Brunn race, whose characteristics were similar to Cro-Magnon. All of these and others, which

are discussed in more detailed volumes than this, are sometimes known as Reindeer Men, because of the importance of these animals in their culture. They are regarded as direct ancestors of modern men.

During the long ages of his evolution in prehistoric times, man shows a fairly steady development toward those forms characteristic of the historic races. Lull has summarized the physical changes which took place as follows: (1) There developed an increasing cranial capacity along with the perfecting of the brain, especially in that part which is concerned with the higher intellectual faculties and with speech. (2) There was a change in the skull conformation, a heightening of the forehead, and a receding of the brow ridges. (3) The jaw and dental arch were reduced, a change which resulted in giving form and prominence to the chin. (4) The teeth became progressively more human. (5) The stature increased and the position of the body became more erect.<sup>1</sup>



Heads of Prehistoric Man: From Left to Right, Pithecanthropus, Piltown, Neanderthal, Cro-Magnon. A Progressive Series of Restorations, by Dr. J. H. McGregor. (Reproduced by special permission of the American Museum of Natural History.)

During the long ages when these prehistoric men lived, human culture had its beginnings and the foundations were laid upon which the early historic civilizations were built. The character of those cultures will be described in detail in a later chapter. Some idea of their character can be gained by

<sup>1</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 37.

reference to Chart IV (p. 53), which presents a general chronology of prehistoric times together with the sequence of prehistoric cultures.

### THE LIMITS AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

The evidence pointing to the evolution of man and his biological relationship to other animals is now before us. The implications of the theory are often misunderstood. Evolution, or rather a misconception of the meaning of evolution, has been a stumbling block to many people who have not been able to reconcile it with certain of the older religious doctrines. Let us make clear that the theory does not assume to explain the origin of life. In no sense is it a substitute for a Creator of life; it is, at most, simply an explanation of the way in which "creation" occurs. Beginning with the fact of life, whatever its origin, it offers the most probable explanation that has yet appeared of the way in which that same life has expressed itself in continuously diversified and ascending forms.

A misapplication of the theory has sometimes led to confused thinking in another direction. In the nineteenth century attempts were made to establish an analogy between organic evolution and social development. The idea was that social institutions and civilization generally are the product of an evolutionary process. Obviously, the analogy, in any scientific sense, is false. Society is not an organism; nor is civilization, nor social institutions. Their growth is not a biological process. They develop and change, but the factors in culture change and growth have already been indicated, and they are quite different from the life-processes involved in organic evolution.<sup>1</sup> When the word evolution is applied to social phenomena to convey the idea of steady or "normal" growth, it is used in a general sense and not the sense in which it is used by the scientist when he deals with the subject of organic evolution.

Does evolution as applied to man imply a promise of continuing progress? Our brief study has disclosed an impressive

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 24-26.



story of the advance of organic beings from the simplest unicellular creatures to the being who overtops the whole of animal creation. Since the story of his creation seems to point to ever higher levels and greater and greater advances, one might well raise the question as to the biological limits to his upward climb. An answer must take note of two major lines along which the development of man has taken place in the course of his evolution.

The first is physical, or bodily, evolution. We have seen that *Homo sapiens* represents the highest species that has been attained so far as biological knowledge records. The biologists tell us, however, that there has been no modification in the bodily structure of man during the past twenty thousand years or more. Although this is a brief moment as compared with the ages of time, so far as we can judge bodily evolution is permanently at a standstill. If this be true, we need not expect any race of physical supermen to arise in the future.

The second line of human evolution is mental. The brain structure itself has undergone no important change during the last several thousand years. From the evidence available, anthropologists infer that the brain of Cro-Magnon man was biologically as good as the brain of twentieth-century man; but the knowledge which that brain contains and the capacity to use the brain have enormously increased. These changes are not organic but educational. Moreover, modern physiological psychology tends to establish the fact that the possibilities of brain use are so great that probably even the most advanced mind of the modern world has not touched more than a fraction of the possibilities his brain possesses.

### THE RACES OF MAN

We have pointed out that all species of life tend, in the process of evolution, to become differentiated into various subdivisions. This is true also of man, but in less degree; for *Homo sapiens* is a species in himself throughout the world, and, strictly speaking, there are no subspecies. Differentiation, however, takes the form of biological divergence of

physical types within the species, forming what are known as *races*. Reference to Chart III will show how the stem of *Hominidae*, after true man finally appears, divides into various racial types. The problem of racial origins is as involved as the other problems we have already noted concerning the earth and its life. Where did man begin? We do not know. His remains, as we have noted, have been found in widely separated parts of the world. Obviously he must have appeared first in some part of the globe where conditions were favorable to human development and to its maintenance after it had begun. The Tigris and Euphrates valleys are regarded by some as the most probable location, with the Yangtze valley in eastern China as a second suggestion. Still a third location, and in some respects a more probable one, is the region of the Mediterranean basin, probably in territory which was once land but is now submerged.

Furthermore, two conflicting views occupy the field concerning the number of origins. The single-stem (monogenist) theory maintains that wherever human beings originated, all subsequent human life has spread from that one center. The multiple-stem (polygenist) theory holds that there were three, and possibly more, places where man originally developed, each "stem" biologically and geographically unrelated to the others. Whatever the facts may be, the proofs are lost in the dim mists of antiquity. We only know that long before the life of man became a matter of historical record he was widely scattered in racial groups over the face of the habitable world.

### **The criteria of racial classifications**

What do we mean by race? Two distinct and conflicting meanings of the term are now in use, to the confusion of each. The first confines race wholly to the biological or anatomical characteristics with which men are endowed; the second does not refer to physical markings at all except indirectly, but regards men as being of the same "race" if they have the same characteristics of culture. A clear discrimination between these two uses must be made at this point. In this immediate discussion we are accepting the first meaning, which is the

usage of the physical anthropologists; that is, we shall use the word in a purely zoölogical sense, to refer to a category of individuals enough differentiated by characteristic bodily traits to be regarded as a distinct variety of the human species. Thus, we refer to the Negro race, because generally speaking the people called "Negro" are sufficiently distinguished physically from other "racial" groups to be set off as a separate type. Similarly, the Alpines are regarded as a subracial unit because they are, on the whole, distinguishable within the Caucasoid pattern from Nordic and Mediterranean.

Among the early anthropologists, the color of the skin was one of the commonest bases of the classification, and school books of the past made the easy and superficial separation of mankind into "white," "black," "red," "brown," and "yellow" races. Such a division has long been abandoned as having no scientific value. Numerous classifications have been made subsequently, upon the basis of the presence or absence of various bodily characteristics. The several criteria which have been most used for this purpose in the past are (1) stature; (2) cephalic index, or the ratio of the width of the skull to its length; (3) nasal index, or the ratio of the length of the nose to its width; (4) facial index, or prognathism, determined by the projection of the lower jaw from the facial plane; (5) skull capacity; (6) hair texture; (7) hairiness of the body, especially as to beard; and finally, (8) skin pigmentation, with which hair color and eye color are usually associated. A number of other criteria have been suggested from time to time, such as the shape of the teeth, or the eye, or the face. Standard categories based on each of the criteria given above will be found, and there are several built up from combinations of the important ones.

Of late years most authorities accept the texture of the hair as a valid criterion of race, and place special emphasis upon the cephalic index. Hair texture depends in part upon the diameter of each individual hair as revealed in cross section under the microscope, and in part upon the degree of straightness or curvature in the root sacs. The straight hair of the Mongoloid is round in cross section; the woolly hair of the



Negroid, flat-oval; the wavy hair of many Caucasians, oval. The cephalic index expresses in percentage form the ratio of the breadth to the length of the head. On this basis three types of heads are distinguishable: (1) broad or round heads (*brachycephalic*), in which the breadth is 80 per cent or more of the length; (2) medium heads (*mesocephalic*), in which the breadth is from 75–80 per cent of the length; and (3) long heads (*dolichocephalic*), in which the breadth is 75 per cent or less of the length. The cephalic index of mankind expressed as an average is 79.

### Two accepted classifications of man according to race

Without going into the merits or demerits of particular classifications, we present herewith two which are widely accepted among American anthropologists today. They are so unlike that an amateur would find it impossible to translate either into terms of the other, yet they are equally valid. The reason for their wide divergence is that they are erected upon different criteria, because their authors' judgments on this point differed. Although both of these are accepted, we point out that no classification can be more than approximately accurate. Any classification of races, and the number of races discovered, are necessarily dependent upon the number and nature of the indices used; and there is no final authority or other standard to settle which criteria are best.

The first of these classifications of races is that of A. L. Kroeber:<sup>1</sup>

(1) *Caucasoid*:

Nordic  
Alpine  
Mediterranean  
Hindu

(2) *Mongoloid*:

Mongolian  
Malaysian (including  
Indonesian)  
American Indian (including Eskimo)

(3) *Negroid*:

African Negro  
Melanesian Negro  
(Oceanic)  
Dwarf Black (including  
Negrito and Bushman)

(4) *Of doubtful classification*:

Australian  
Indo-Australian  
Polynesian  
Ainu

<sup>1</sup>Kroeber, A. L., *Anthropology* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., Revised Edition, 1933), p. 41.

The second is the classification given by R. B. Dixon,<sup>1</sup> whose full list includes twenty-seven divisions; only the major headings are given here:

- |                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| (1) Caspian          | (5) Alpine       |
| (2) Mediterranean    | (6) Ural         |
| (3) Proto-Negroid    | (7) Palae-Alpine |
| (4) Proto-Australoid | (8) Mongoloid    |

### Physical characteristics distinguishing races

In Chart III (p. 49) we present a tentative graphic representation of the descent of man, indicating his prehuman ancestry and the eventual appearance, according to Kroeber, of his main ethnic divisions. Following Kroeber's classification, let us consider briefly some of the physical characteristics underlying his differentiation of races.

(Of the three major racial stems, the Caucasoid is the one to which the white populations of Europe and their American descendants belong.) The Nordic branch, largely Teutonic, originally grouped about the North and Baltic seas, are long-headed, generally tall in stature, with light hair and complexion, and blue eyes. The Mediterranean, of which most of the Italians are typical, is also long-headed, medium in height and slender, with swarthy complexion and dark hair and eyes. Between these two is the Alpine, identified with Central Europe, broad-headed, above average in height, and of brown hair and eyes. By a curious turn in prehistoric migration, the fourth member of the family moved east and southward into Asia, becoming eventually the Hindus of India, whose original Caucasoid features have been modified through admixture of blood with Asiatic peoples.

The Mongoloid stock includes Eastern Asiatic groups, such as the Chinese and Japanese, the Malays of the Malay Peninsula and the East Indies, and the American Indians. Typically, the Mongoloid races have straight, black hair, little body hair, broad heads, brown skins (from light to dark brown), and broad faces. They are below the average in height, with

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<sup>1</sup>*The Racial History of Man* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923), pp. 3-23.

the exception of the American Indian, who ranges from tall to medium. The oblique or "Mongolian" eye tends to be confined to the eastern Asiatic branch of Mongoloids. Among the Malay groups the skin tends to be darker than that of the peoples of the East, especially so among the so-called "Indonesian" strain of the East Indies. The American Indian represents the Mongolian stock on the American continents. This group is usually characterized as having straight, coarse, black hair, prominent cheek bones, and large, wide noses.

The Negroid stock, the third main stem of mankind according to our classification, is generally characterized as having a black skin, woolly hair, little or no body hair, a narrow or long head, a broad nose, and a tendency toward thick and everted lips. Kroeber has divided the Negroid stock into three sub-races—*viz.*, the Negro (of Africa, more especially of western and central Africa); the Melanesian of the Melanesian Islands in the Pacific; and the dwarf or pygmy blacks found in southern and central Africa, the Malay Peninsula, and the East Indies. Each of these groups is distinguishable in certain traits from the others. Thus, the pygmy groups are generally broad-headed instead of narrow-headed, and are short in stature, while the Negro of Africa tends to be tall, and the Melanesian medium in height.

The stocks given as of doubtful classification may be briefly described. The Australian, the first type given in this list, is tall and has a black skin—more accurately described as chocolate brown, varying from dark to lighter shades. He is narrow-headed and broad-nosed, and has wavy hair and a luxuriant growth of body hair. The Indo-Australians, including tribes in Ceylon and southeastern Asia, have wavy hair and long heads; they are short in stature and dark brown in color. Polynesians vary, but may be described typically as wavy-haired, medium in nose-width, brown of skin, and tall. The type in Polynesia is decidedly confused—naturally so, since he is the heir to both Mongoloid and Caucasoid strains and in certain regions has a Negroid admixture as well. The Ainus, perhaps the original "natives" of Japan, are often regarded as kinsmen of the Caucasoid. They are narrow-headed, wavy-



haired, have noses of medium width, are light brown in color, and are medium in height.

### **Racial distribution and racial mixture**

Several points should be kept clearly in mind in any consideration of biological racial types. In the first place, the three major racial divisions are by no means limited in their distribution to a particular continent or to any specific territorial area. While it is true that so far as numbers are concerned the Caucasoid is more definitely related to Europe, the Mongoloid to Asia, and the Negroid to Africa, all of them, as scholars point out, have long since become definitely intercontinental, and branches of each will be found in every continent. Again, no significant connection whatsoever exists between biological races and political nationalities. No nation illustrates this point better than the United States, which, while predominantly Caucasoid, nevertheless includes representatives and mixtures of every race. Furthermore, we must remember that even biologically speaking, the term "race" is an exceedingly indefinite and hypothetical term. Ethnologists tell us that with one or two possible but unimportant and uncertain exceptions, there is no such thing as a biologically pure race. Long before the dawn of history, people had crossed with people to such an extent that exact biological differentiation is frequently impossible and in every case is problematical. With our childhood training, which taught us to regard a Chinese as unequivocally a Chinese and a Negro as a Negro, it is difficult for us to realize this; but the findings of ethnology and anthropology are too certain upon this score for any informed person to believe that peoples or individuals can be found who have not somewhere along the line had their blood intermingled with that of other races.

The interfusion of peoples, with the resulting racial mixtures, is as inevitable as human nature itself. From time immemorial circumstances have brought people of different blood into juxtaposition. Sometimes the reason has been conquest, sometimes commerce, sometimes a wanderlust; but wherever any motive or circumstance has led people of two races to live

side by side, individuals in each group have been attracted to those of the opposite sex in the other group. Sometimes it has been upon the basis of the conqueror and the conquered, sometimes as equals; but in any event, children have been born to the union in whose veins the blood of both has mingled. As a result, race has crossed with race, and the descendants have crossed with the descendants of other races until it is no longer possible to single out strains that are pure and unmixed. The process of migration, intermingling, and amalgamation, indefinitely repeated through untold generations, has made not only America, but the whole world, a "melting pot" of races. This being the case, we should accept the fact that, save in a very general way, a biological racial designation is a pure fiction, or at least a hypothetical designation. Many individuals technically classified as Alpines may be distinctly Nordic in type. The Chinese merge imperceptibly into the Amerind. Many "blacks" are much fairer-skinned than many "whites." It is impossible to adopt any criterion that is so exact and final as to make possible a convincing absolute differentiation.

To what extent is this amalgamation taking place? Edwin Grant Conklin<sup>1</sup> states that from fifteen to twenty per cent of the total Negro population of about ten and a half millions in the United States in 1900 were mulattoes, and that mulattoes are increasing in number more rapidly than the pure blacks. In South America, according to Conklin, it has been estimated that there were in 1920 about twenty million persons of mixed blood as compared with twenty-six millions of whites, Indians, and Negroes; while in Australia and New Zealand, where white men have been for about a century, there are already almost as many half-castes as full-blooded aborigines. With such an admixture of blood taking place among the three great racial bodies, we are not surprised to find amalgamation going on at a much more rapid pace among the several lesser ethnic subdivisions of each where the kinship is closer. We have noted that the United States is an example of this, *par excellence*. Culturally our people are "American"; but aside from the American Indian, who is Mongoloid, there is no American

<sup>1</sup>In the *Yale Review*, July 1922.

"race" in this country. Our population is a collection of hybrids, representing blood combinations of practically all ethnic forms that have been listed, particularly those of Europe.

As man widens his ethnic contacts, these are characteristically reflected in his cross-mating; and this tendency is more pronounced now than ever before, because such contacts are more nearly universal than ever before. Conklin, noting this general tendency toward mating across racial lines, concludes that "if this movement goes on, as we have every right to expect that it will, it can only end in a more or less complete fusion of existing races, and it needs only the vision that can look ahead a few thousand years at most to see all races blended into a common stream."

### SELECTED REFERENCES FOR FURTHER READING

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## BIOLOGICAL FACTORS IN CULTURE



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**B**IOLOGICALLY, man is a product of organic evolution. The preceding chapter presents some of the salient evidence on which that conclusion is based. There, in demonstrating man's biological continuity with the other animals, similarities between man and beast were emphasized. Obviously, however, it is not similarities but contrasts that distinguish man from the rest of animal creation. For present purposes these contrasts or differences are of great importance because they explain man's unique position in the animal kingdom as the one creature capable of developing and transmitting culture. The question as to how man alone came to acquire those differentiating qualities is not easy to answer. The most plausible explanation is that they have resulted from deviations, or mutations, as the biologist calls them, which occurred in the process of man's evolution.

If man stands alone as a culture-builder it follows that any inquiry into the nature of the forces that enter into the creating of culture should begin with a consideration of man's distinctive biological equipment. That is to say, we must begin with the forces which have their seat in man's body and which constitute the psycho-physical foundation of his manifold powers and of his behavior. These forces we call biological factors. Our present purpose is to examine the role they play

in social life and culture development. The discussion may be centered about certain pertinent questions: (1) What biological qualities differentiate man from other animals and give him alone the capacity to invent, accumulate, and transmit culture? (2) To what extent do biological differences explain contrasts among civilizations? (3) How and to what extent do biological factors explain differences in the behavior of individuals and groups within a given civilization? Let us consider the first of these.

### WHY MAN IS THE SOLE CULTURE-BUILDER

Man's supremacy in the world of living things and his unique capacity to build civilization are based on certain superior qualities both mental and physical. Chief among these are his greater brain power, his superior vocal apparatus, his erect posture, his tool-making hands, and his greater plasticity. These qualities are of course closely interrelated in equipping man as a culture-builder and cannot be understood as isolated factors. Coördinated as they are in living man they combine to give him his unparalleled powers and make him the remarkable creature that he is.

#### The mental capacity of man

Man has a larger brain, relative to the size of his body, than have other animals. The animals most nearly approaching man in the evolutionary scale, namely, the anthropoid apes, have a cranial capacity of less than half that of man, although in bodily weight they frequently surpass him. Seldom if ever does an anthropoid ape have a cranial capacity of more than 600 cubic centimeters. *Pithecanthropus erectus* had a cranial capacity about midway between the upper limits of contemporary anthropoid apes and the lower limits of contemporary man. When judged in terms of size alone man's brain seems superior to that of other animals.

Man's brain is not only larger; it possesses a quality not possessed by other animals, the capacity for imagination. Imagination consists essentially in the ability to free one's self from the immediate situation of reality and to construct an unreal,



imagined situation by the utilization of *free symbols*; that is, of signs which carry intellectual meanings and which may be separated temporarily from both the sender and receiver, and thus may be detached from the concrete situation to which they refer. (The power of abstract reasoning, which is ordinarily regarded as differentiating man from the beast) depends directly upon this basic quality of developing and using free symbols. Reasoning consists essentially of comparative imagining. It takes place in problem-solving situations. Man's ability to solve problems is, like that of animals, a trial-and-error process, but in the solving of a problem the animal must actually perform the overt, random action which may finally result in success, whereas man may imaginatively project himself into the future and view possible alternatives on the basis of imagined situations before ever beginning his overt behavior. It is the ability to construct meaningful imaginative situations, to communicate them to his fellows, and to retain them as guides to future collective action that enables man to develop a culture.

Beasts do not possess the ability to imagine or to reason, at least not to any significant degree. Köhler, who has made an intensive study of the social and mental life of apes, states emphatically that these animals have no capacity for imagination. A careful reading of Köhler's materials indicates that some of the apes, particularly the one called Sultan, approached very closely, if they did not actually achieve, the formulation of abstract concepts. Notwithstanding such evidence, however, Köhler and other careful students of animal life maintain that animals have no more than a trace of this imaginative ability. While there is no reason to be dogmatic on this question, the present weight of evidence supports the conclusion that animals are unable to reason. Even if further investigation demonstrates that animals possess some significant degree of imaginative power, it remains fairly certain that the difference in degree between them and man will remain so great that man may always be justly characterized as the one creature possessing imagination and the consequent power to reason, and, therefore, the only one capable of developing culture.

**Man's superior vocal powers**

Man is able to communicate more effectively with his fellows than are the other animals. His superior vocal apparatus is an important factor in this accomplishment. Because of the particular formation of his larynx and the roof of his mouth and the position in which his vocal cords are placed, man can produce a wide variety of sounds and tones. This ability enables man to communicate shades of meaning that would be impossible of expression with a less flexible vocal apparatus.

Vocalization offers certain facilities for communication superior to those of any other form; the voice may be heard for considerable distances in every direction and it requires no equipment other than innate biological characteristics, man's vocal organs. These traits of vocalization were of particular importance prior to the invention of writing.

The importance of superior vocal apparatus in effective communication depends directly upon man's superior brain. The power of imagination enables him to use the wide variety of sounds as free symbols, signs which express something more than the immediate emotional cries of the beast. Man has developed and organized a series of these signs into what we call a language. Language is, as we have discovered, one of man's most important cultural traits. Beasts, none of which possess language, may be able to signal to one another by means of emotional cries and gestures, but they cannot share a rich fund of common meanings through use of free symbols, which is the essential feature of human communication. The richness of human communication through language rests jointly upon the biological factors of superior brain and vocal apparatus.

**Man's manual dexterity**

Man alone can be truly called a tool-making and tool-using animal. The ape may use a stick or stone for immediate purposes, but it makes no attempt to fashion tools for use in future emergencies. All of man's great inventions are the elaborate results of this tool-making ability.

Man's supremacy in this respect depends upon two physical

attributes—his tool-making hands and his erect posture.) The invention and use of tools depend, of course, upon superior mental ability; but his dexterity in their use is further explained by the erectness of his posture and the peculiar character of his hands. Man is the only animal that habitually assumes an upright posture. Although this erect posture is desirable for any animal having a large head and brain, it is not in itself of great importance. The significance of upright posture lies in the fact that it has left the hands free for purposes other than that of locomotion. Moreover, the human hand is better adapted to the manipulation of tools than the hand or paw of any other animal; man has tool-making hands, a characteristic due largely to his possession of the opposable thumb. The human thumb is sufficiently large and well-developed to be used for purposes of grasping, whereas the ape has a thumb so small and weak and poorly located that it is difficult for it to grasp objects firmly between thumb and forefinger. These points of biological superiority have been of extreme importance in enabling man to make and use tools.

Man's superior biological qualities of brain, vocal apparatus, tool-making hands, and erect posture operate together in making possible the invention, communication, and utilization of items of culture. To these qualities we must add another of cardinal importance. That is man's extreme plasticity, his capacity for being easily shaped and molded by external influences. Man's plasticity makes possible the effective transmission of culture from generation to generation and, through that process, the gradual accumulation of a complex civilization.

### **Man's plasticity and its significance**

The human infant is more completely dependent and more plastic than the offspring of any other animal. He is entirely helpless for a period after birth, unable to perform alone the most simple acts which will insure his biological survival. Even his hunger cannot be satisfied except through the co-operation of others. He cannot roll himself over, he cannot escape danger, he cannot even see or hear for a period of time



after birth. No other animal is so completely helpless. Moreover, the infant mammals, such as pig, calf, or colt, become relatively independent of their parents within a few days or weeks, whereas the human infant must be given care and protection over a period of several years. In the whole animal world man's immaturity is most prolonged, and this period is further extended with the increasing complexity of civilization.

At first glance the complete and long-continued immaturity of the human infant seems to place him at a disadvantage, but, as a matter of fact, the opposite is true, for man is plastic during his long period of immaturity. An old saying declares that one cannot teach an old dog new tricks, and in this sense the dog becomes old quickly. His learning period is short because his period of plasticity is short, while in man the extended period of plastic immaturity means the extension of his education throughout a period of many years. Moreover, he is so completely plastic that the group can mold and educate him in almost any direction it desires—within the limits of his biological capacity. Hence the great importance of the long formative period of human life. The group can control the main patterns of acting, thinking, and feeling for the individual, and it has time to transmit to him the tremendously complex culture heritage which it has accumulated through the course of hundreds of thousands of years.

#### **Man's plasticity and his capacity to learn**

Man is *par excellence* an educable animal. The significance of this fact becomes clear when we consider how few of man's actions are innate—that is, a result of his biological heredity alone—and how many are the result of his education during the period of plasticity. And by education we do not have reference merely to the formal process which goes by that name, but to the whole course of socialization whereby human behavior in all its aspects is brought into conformity with the cultural demands of the group. What types of behavior, then, are innate? What types are learned? What is their relative importance in the building of culture?

*Heritable behavior.* A number of relatively simple and definite types of behavior which occur in response to definite situations are unquestionably biologically inherited. These are ordinarily called reflexes, and may be illustrated by the tendency of the foot to jerk upward when the knees are crossed and a sharp blow is struck just below the kneecap, and by the tendency of the pupil of the eye to contract when the subject is brought suddenly into a bright light. These types of behavior are so definite and universal that they are used by physicians for the purpose of medical diagnosis. An extensive list of them may be obtained by reference to a good medical dictionary. These inherited reflexes are, however, of little value in interpreting the social behavior of an adult human being.

Combinations of simple reflexes are also inherited. In a "chained reflex," such as swallowing, a simple stimulation may set off the first response, this response in turn becoming the stimulus for the succeeding response, the second response in turn setting off the third, and so on, to the end of the act. In another combination known as the circular reflex, a response becomes the stimulus for its own repetition. This circular reflex gives rise to rhythmic behavior, as in laughing. More complicated than these chained or circular reflexes are the physiological processes, such as digestion, circulation, and respiration, all of which are inherited.

Watson, a psychologist, has described three simple groups of innate actions which may be induced in any normal infant by definite types of stimulation. One of these groups of reactions is described by him as "sudden catching of the breath, clutching randomly with the hands, . . . sudden closing of the eyelids, puckering of the lips, then crying. . . ." This set of innate responses which he calls *fear* can be induced without learning by only two stimuli: (1) a sudden, loud sound, and (2) a sudden withdrawal of support. Two other similar emotional seizures called *rage* and *love* have likewise been isolated and described by Watson. These emotional reactions refer only to such simple forms of behavior as were described in the above quotation. They bear little resem-

blance to complex ways of acting, thinking, and feeling which an adult exhibits as rage, fear, or love. Like other innate ways of acting, these emotional seizures are of little importance in understanding the form of human culture.

*Learned behavior.* How far are our complex ways of acting unlearned? Consider the behavior of a young infant in response to the drive of hunger. He has no innate behavior patterns by which to satisfy his hunger except the reflex of suckling, the chained reflex of swallowing, and the physiological process of digestion. When the infant is hungry he begins to display, not specific patterns of behavior, but a wide variety of more or less random movements together with certain reflexive actions such as crying, which become signals to mother or nurse that he is in need of something. The next step in satisfying the infant's hunger must, however, be taken by his attendant. He is entirely dependent upon some other person for obtaining food. He is so plastic that his taste for food, the time at which he demands it, and the way in which he takes it are, within the limits of his physiological capacity, all determined by cultural patterns forced upon him by the persons who have him in charge. One must not forget, however, that human beings do inherit such drives to action as hunger, thirst, and sex. They also inherit the tendency to make relatively random movements when they are in need of satisfying some appetite. But the impulsive drives to action and the random movements take a specific form and direction, and become important factors in social behavior only as they are given definition by the culture of the group.

The point for emphasis is that the tastes, the habits, the attitudes, and the ideas of the human infant are dependent upon the culture in which he is reared. He inherits only a limited number of ways of acting—reflexes, physiological processes, emotional seizures—and these have but little social significance. The important facts are that he is born plastic, ready to be shaped by social contacts; and that he is taught most of his specific ways of acting, thinking, and feeling by his associates. It is in the course of this learning process that the human being adjusts himself to the complex requirements of civilization.



### Plasticity and culture-accumulation

Plasticity, which gives man the capacity to acquire the accumulated culture of the group, makes it possible for each human generation to start its creative efforts at the point where the preceding ones have stopped. Each generation is able to stand on the shoulders of its cultural ancestors and to add its own contribution to the total accumulation. This ability gives cultured man a decided advantage over noncultured animals, among which each generation must start from the same level as its ancestors. Man lives in a world that is culturally defined—a world which he enjoys as a culture heritage—not in a purely physical world of mechanical surroundings such as that which beasts inhabit.

### BIOLOGICAL FACTORS AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CULTURES

The biological traits which set men apart from the rest of the animal world and give him his supreme place as a builder of civilization are now before us. These basic biological qualities seem to be shared in common by all types of men. Human beings of widely varying biological types and of every culture level possess these distinctive qualities of brain, posture, hands, and plasticity which make possible the invention, accumulation, and transmission of a culture heritage. The "lowest" savage possesses them as truly as does the man from the "highest" civilization.

Our second line of inquiry carries us to a consideration of the possible relation between biological qualities and differences among civilizations. The striking contrasts among the cultures of the world have already been brought to our attention—not only contrasts in the cultural items which comprise different civilizations, but wide contrasts in the degrees to which civilizations have been developed in different areas of the globe.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps some of the major contrasts may have a biological basis. Perhaps some biological types of men possess qualities which make them capable of producing the higher

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 22 ff.

types of civilization while less gifted types remain on a level of savagery because of their inability to advance further. These suppositions we wish now to examine in the light of available data.

Racial differences which divide men into great biological categories seem to offer the greatest promise of illuminating the possible relations of biological qualities to differences in cultures. The present discussion will be limited to this single set of biological factors—race. Before going further it is desirable to recall the definitions of race presented in an earlier chapter. Race was defined, biologically, as a collection of individuals sufficiently distinguished anatomically from other collections of individuals to be regarded as a variety of the human species. Let it be remembered that race defined in this way does not refer directly to a cultural or political group, but to a biological category. There is no such thing as a French, English, Semitic, or Aryan race according to the terms of this definition. It may be further recalled that even when the discussion of race was limited strictly to the biological point of view further difficulties were encountered. Dixon, using one set of racial criteria, arrived at a totally different classification of races from that of Kroeber, who used a different set of criteria. All such classifications rest upon sets of criteria which have been more or less arbitrarily selected, and no certain proof can be produced which demonstrates that one is more nearly correct than the other. Notwithstanding such difficulties of classification, all persons admit that biological differences between races do exist, and that they should be examined in analyzing the reasons for the differences in cultures.

### Theories about race as a factor in culture

Many writers have uncritically assumed that their own definitions and classifications of race are valid and have used them as the basis for explaining differences in the development of cultures. The most radical of these theorists are the *racial determinists*, who declare that the form of culture depends entirely upon the racial factor. Prominent among these theorists are A. de Gobineau, Otto Ammon, Houston Cham-

berlin, and Madison Grant. Lothrop Stoddard, a contemporary exponent of this point of view, states it as follows: "All these marvelous achievements of Western civilization were due solely to superior heredity, and the . . . maintenance of race values. Civilization of itself means nothing. It is merely an effect, whose cause is the creative urge of superior germ plasm." This extreme point of view, while held by only a small minority, contains the assumption of racial inequality which, in a modified form, constitutes a widely accepted popular belief today. Let us examine some of the implications of this theory.

The racial determinists assume that race as a physical fact is causally related to types of mentality, temperament, and character traits. It is asserted, for example, that the Nordic is mentally and socially different from the Alpine and Mediterranean. The Nordic is said to be naturally more aggressive, warlike, and powerful than either of the others; that he possesses a better abstract intelligence and a greater capacity for political organization. The Mediterranean is said to be more artistic, subtle, and volatile; while the Alpine is pictured as stolid, slow, dull—the eternal peasant—with no such gift for government or large-scale organization as the Nordic habitually displays. The Negro is pictured as sensuous and imaginative, but as quite incapable of empire-building, scientific achievement, and complex economic development.

Not only do the racial determinists assume that races differ from one another but that they may be graded on a scale of innate ability, some of them being far superior to others. No complete uniformity exists among the theorists as to the relative position of the races on this scale, though most of them agree on many points. Since most of the authors who write on the subject are Nordics, one might expect them to place the Negroid at the bottom and the Caucasoid at the top of the scale, with the Mongoloid in an intermediate position. The sub-racial groups are likewise graded with the Nordic most frequently appearing at the top of the scale. Such is the popular belief in what is termed Nordic superiority or supremacy.

A corollary of the assumption that races differ in innate capacity is the belief that amalgamation is a menace to higher



cultural development. Madison Grant, for example, in his volume *The Passing of the Great Race*, is certain that the biological mixture of European stocks will, if continued, lead to the downfall of the Nordics. Many other authors and lecturers point warning fingers to this danger. They declare that the ancient cultures of Babylonia, Assyria, Greece, and Rome decayed because of the mixing of "inferior" with the "better" racial stocks. They cite South America, Central America, and Mexico as horrible examples of backwardness, and explain the sorry condition in these regions as the inevitable result of the infusion of inferior racial stocks. They warn the United States against the wholesale introduction of immigrant populations from central, southern, and eastern Europe if it would avoid racial deterioration.

The racial determinists believe further that race limits the possible cultural development of a people and that all great cultures have been the result of superior racial stocks. They account for the superior achievements of Greeks, Romans, and later western Europeans solely upon the basis of racial qualities. Problems of the development of peoples which are frequently baffling to students of history and culture development are thus presumably solved by these racial determinists with their simple dogma of racial superiority.

### **A critical analysis of racial determinism**

What of the truth of these theories? This is a difficult question, and no satisfactory answer can be given in the present state of incomplete and uncertain knowledge. One may, however, profitably examine some of the available evidence. We shall start with a critical evaluation of the data concerning the relative capacities of the races, using Kroeber's classification as the basis for discussion.

Some of the racial determinists have attempted to rest their conclusions on the assumption that the various races—Negroid, Mongoloid, Caucasoid—represent different stages in the biological evolutionary process. Those peoples who have advanced furthest in the evolutionary scale are assumed to be biologically superior to the others. The degree of biological

advance is supposedly measurable by the degree of divergence from the ape. Thus the Negroid is alleged to be inferior because of his supposed greater similarity to the anthropoid ape; his prognathous jaw, receding forehead, and broad, flat nose being cited in evidence. When, however, one compares the texture of the hair, the thickness of the lips, or the amount of hair on the body, he finds that, on the basis of these criteria, the Caucasoid is more like the ape than is the Negroid. Kroeber finds that when one takes a sufficiently large number of physical criteria into account he discovers that each of the major races has as many points of similarity to the ape as any one of the others, and that consequently no evidence of racial inequality is obtainable from this line of investigation.

The simpler biological traits—such as acuteness of the senses, body temperatures, and respiration rate—show a few significant differences among races. For example, one anthropologist has found that the Indians of the southwestern part of the United States have a pulse rate ten per minute slower than the white man's. It is further known that the average cranial capacity of races differs, the Negroid having a smaller brain than the Caucasoid. Such differences as have been discovered among the races have not, however, been shown to be causally related to differences in the forms of cultures.

Intelligence tests have been applied to different races in the course of educational and military procedures. They indicate that the Negroid ranks lower, on the average, than the Caucasoid in the United States. In every test, however, the range of intelligence in each racial group is great; in fact, the testers have found that nearly one half of the Negroes achieve an intelligence rating higher than the average made by the white people. Granting the correctness of these facts, one may raise the further question as to whether they prove anything concerning the innate mentality of the races in view of the fact that the individual's experience enters into his simplest mental operations. Purely innate intelligence, unchanged by experience, cannot be accurately measured by any tests which have so far been devised. Furthermore, the intelligence tests which are ordinarily given to large groups do not test all the mental

capacities, such as will, temperament, and special abilities. From results obtained through the use of mental tests, no basis exists which warrants dogmatic conclusions concerning the relative innate mentality of the races.

Many persons have argued that the development of a high culture by the Caucasoids constitutes proof of their superior ability, but this conclusion by no means necessarily follows. The dominance of Western civilization is a relatively recent thing. Civilizations rise and fall, and the culture of the modern Caucasoid has not always been supreme. One would be rash to conclude that because the white man's culture has been dominant in one section of the world for 5000 years, it will necessarily remain dominant for the next 100,000 years of culture history. Moreover, the white people of today have borrowed many basic elements of culture either from their pre-literate ancestors or from other races. Negroes and Orientals, living within the limits of Western civilization, continually make inventions and discoveries which white people assume to be the products of their own race. Modern Western civilization is a compound of the cultures of peoples from many races. Of course, when one examines only the contemporary period of human history he is impressed with the supremacy of the white man's civilization; especially so if he accepts the white man's criteria for evaluating its merits. This is the white man's day in court. What the historical morrow will bring forth no one can say.

Is amalgamation a menace? One cannot answer with certainty until he has more facts at his disposal. It may be noted, however, that amalgamation is one of the oldest facts of history. As already indicated,<sup>1</sup> the mingling of races has been going on so long and so persistently that there are few, if any, pure racial types. The racial determinists note the facts of racial mixture and the facts of social decline, and declare that the two sets of facts are related; but their procedure is far from scientific, for the evidence available is meager and inconclusive, and mostly of a negative character. It does not warrant a dogmatic conclusion.

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<sup>1</sup>Pp. 65-67.



Does race limit the cultural development of a people? One must answer that he cannot be certain. In the first place he realizes that culture and races have crossed until there is no such thing as a racial culture; that is to say, there is no important culture which one can call the product of a single race. For example, the Negro uses an American culture in the United States, an English, French, or German culture in various parts of Africa, an Oriental culture in China or India. In the second place culture change is explicable, to some degree at least, in other terms than those of race. No reputable student of culture uses race as a basic fact in explaining culture forms. He appeals to history, to the contacts of peoples, to geographic environment, and to other observable and describable facts to explain the course of development of specific culture complexes. Third, culture is constantly changing, whereas race is assumed to be relatively constant. Culture does seem to change in many instances without any noticeable change in race. Fourth, the evidence which may be gleaned from personal documents tends to show that an intelligent member of any race can assimilate the culture of any group in which he has been reared. This fact indicates that social contacts with other people, rather than racial inheritance, determine the form of culture which a given person is likely to exhibit and use. It is the social rather than the biological heritage which is significant in determining the form that culture takes—at least for any given generation of people.

Can history be explained in terms of race? Few reputable historians have tried it. We learned in Chapter II, and shall see later in the study of the development of our Western civilization, that culture is a cumulative thing. Each people has borrowed extensively from its cultural ancestors and from its contemporary neighbors. The culture of the ancient Greeks contains a surprising number of elements from the ancient civilizations of the Near East. Some students have gone so far as to declare that all cultural development is the result of contacts of peoples. While such a position is probably too extreme, one may readily admit that in most historic instances the hypothesis that culture changes primarily as the

result of contacts between peoples is a more tenable theory than the hypotheses of racial or geographic determinism.

It is not to be inferred from the preceding analysis that racial differences have no significance in explaining contrasting features of cultures. For example, one might reasonably argue that in situations where major biological differences exist, and where, after several generations of contact and diffusion, important culture variations still persist, these variations may depend upon biological factors. Or one might raise questions about inventions, for the relation between biological type and inventive ability has not been determined with sufficient accuracy to warrant either the conclusion that one race is more inventive than another or the opposite conclusion that they are equal in this respect. Perhaps future research will prove that races vary in important aptitudes if not in capacities. At present, however, no one seems able to prove that race is or is not an important factor in explaining cultural differences. One's mind should be kept open on this subject until more data can be obtained.

### **Racial bias as a factor in culture**

There is another fact of considerable importance growing out of the position assumed by the racial determinists. Their writings have had considerable effect upon popular attitudes and opinions. Race, as such, may not be an important factor in human affairs; but the ideas, the beliefs, the attitudes, and the sentiments associated with race are important elements in human history. Race *per se* may be nil in its influence, but what we think of race is of importance in social life. The racial determinists may be entirely wrong; but with their point of view widely diffused as it is, the concepts of racial difference and racial inequality are of importance in social relations. Our beliefs, ideas, feelings, sentiments, and attitudes, irrespective of the biological facts involved, affect our practices and policies with reference to other races, and hence are important factors in human affairs.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A tragic illustration of the truth of this statement is found in Germany today (1939) where Nazi oppression of the Jews is pursued on the assumption of the

Consider the usual attitude of the Caucasoid toward the Negro. The commonly accepted idea of his intrinsic inferiority is not based on any adequate proof of his inferiority—for there is no adequate proof—but rather upon the basis of concepts growing out of the usual practice of segregation and low-caste status to which we assign him in our social system. That is to say, it is his historic background—the ideas, beliefs, and attitudes associated with him—rather than an established inferiority that gives him his low-caste position. This social concept of the Negro, rather than authentic biological data, commonly determines our behavior toward him; and the same principle holds true for our racial biases generally.

The powerful influence which race as a social concept plays in our culture may be made clear by a concrete illustration. A mulatto family whose members were almost white moved into a small Midwestern town, where the father opened a store. There were no Negroes in the town and the family was accepted by the citizens as white. They were received into church, club, and fraternal life. The children were well adjusted to school and play groups. By accident it was learned that they had Negro blood. Immediately the bars of social isolation were set up, and the family was forced to leave town. In this case the facts of physical make-up and color of skin were not responsible for the awakening of racial prejudice. When a member of this family was classed as a Negro, even though his skin was white and he had no other physical traits of the Negroid race, he was isolated from white society.

Biological traits become significant in race relations whenever they are utilized to place a person in a racial category, so that one reacts to him according to approved cultural attitudes of his group. Persons do not react against the color of the skin as such, but against the culturally defined idea of the Negro race. The fact that this racial concept may have no valid basis of fact is of little concern to most persons in their daily course of life.

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superiority of the "true" German as a member of the so-called Aryan "race," which, as a biological fact, has no existence outside the imagination of the racial determinists. See pp. 161-163.



One important consequence of racial bias has been the growth of racial pride. The white races of the world have not been content with developing their own civilization in isolation from the other peoples of the world, but have insisted upon carrying their civilization to those whom they consider less advanced. They have encouraged colored peoples to share the advantages of Western civilization. Many of the colored leaders, impressed by the example of the white man, have tried to imitate his customs and manners and thus to gain recognition as an equal; but even when they have proved their ability they have usually still found themselves isolated from the inner circles of the white man, and have been kept in positions of inferiority.

These experiences are having significant repercussions. Colored leaders are turning back to their own people, striving to stimulate and develop a strong race pride among them. Certain colored leaders in the United States are urging the Negro to turn away from imitation of white people and to strive to develop his own "racial" talents to the highest degree. By such a course, he is told, he will be able to make his own distinctive and valuable contributions to the total civilization of the world. Under the stimulating influence of this kind of leadership the colored peoples are rapidly developing a strong sense of racial pride and unity. This spirit is spreading widely over the globe. It is felt among the Negroes of the United States and of Africa and among the millions of Mongoloids of Asia. In view of the tremendous size of these colored populations, the continued development of race pride and race solidarity may become a powerful threat to the peace of the world and possibly to white supremacy.

How long will it take these race antagonisms to develop into strife on a vast scale no one can say. Such an event appears to be rather remote in the United States and in Africa. In the Far East, one may speculate what effect the rising power and aggressiveness of the Japanese may have upon the fortunes of Western civilization. The present point of importance in such speculations is the reflection that much of the race bitterness that feeds racial antagonisms has its source not

in demonstrated facts about race but in *beliefs* about race, beliefs usually blindly nourished by prejudice and rarely critically examined.

### BIOLOGICAL FACTORS AND DIFFERENCES WITHIN A CULTURE

We have now reached the last question presented at the beginning of this chapter, "How and to what extent can biological factors explain differences in the behavior of groups and persons within a given civilization?" We shall confine the discussion to three aspects of the subject: To what extent do biological variations account for (1) differences in the behavior of men and women, (2) the stratification of communities into social classes, and (3) differences in the individual behavior of various persons within a local community?

#### Biological differences and the status of women

There are unquestionably important biological differences between the sexes. The most important of these differences determine the distinctive functions of male and female in the production and perpetuation of the species. The primary sex characteristics are accompanied by other attributes, some of which are important in explaining differences in the behavior of men and women. Space precludes any detailed treatment of these biological differences. It is sufficient for our purposes to indicate a few of them. The average height and weight of the male are greater than that of the female. In bodily proportions there are obvious differences: the male is broader in the shoulders and the female broader in the hips, relative to total bodily weight. Woman's brain is, on the average, smaller than that of man. No one can deny the existence of such biological differences.

It is commonly believed that biological facts explain the position women occupy in a given civilization, and that they justify the confining of woman's activities to certain spheres of daily life. What is the validity of such beliefs? How far can one explain the occupations of men and women on the basis of biological differences? A survey of the division of

labor in different cultures and at different periods of time shows clearly that sex does not determine occupation nearly so definitely as is ordinarily supposed. Durkheim's classical volume on *The Division of Labor* supports the hypothesis that every occupation which at one time and place has been regarded as distinctly man's work has been at some other time and place performed by women, and vice versa. This general statement excludes of course the physiological functions of childbearing and breast feeding which women alone must perform, but it includes numerous other customs of care of children and all sorts of tasks which we uncritically accept as belonging naturally either to man's or woman's sphere of activity.

Perhaps biological differences, including that of sex, should be used in formulating a proper division of labor. If woman is smaller and consequently weaker than man she possibly should not be permitted to perform the heavier tasks. We find, however, that in some countries where woman is expected to do manual labor she can do surprisingly well, and that her strength exceeds that of men, who, in these countries, do not perform the heavier tasks. Moreover, within our own nation numerous women excel some men in physical strength. Perhaps the most logical basis for a division of labor on biological grounds might be determined by a series of studies of the fitness of men and women for certain occupations; but no such scientific approach to the problem has ever been attempted. One must accept the common-sense conclusion that the prevailing differences in the behavior of the sexes, with the exception of childbearing and breast feeding, must be explained primarily on cultural rather than on biological grounds.

### **Biological differences and social stratification**

What of the relation of biological differences to social stratification? Social classes are sometimes thought to rest on biological differences. The more extreme examples of social stratification, such as the caste system of India, were supposed to have a biological basis. The members of the superior caste thought of themselves as molded from a su-



perior sort of clay, and as possessing a superior hereditary equipment. This same idea of biological superiority of one social class is found in exaggerated form in those civilizations where royalty occupies an important position. In some places emphasis on the superiority of royal blood has led to close intermarriage between relatives, and in some cases, even to the marriage of brother and sister, on the assumption that no other person had sufficiently pure blood to make him a fit mate for royalty. A similar assumption of biological superiority on the part of the noble or aristocratic class appears in the writings of the later centuries of the Middle Ages. The accepted opinion of that period makes the peasants, who comprised some ninety per cent of the population, appear like grotesque creatures of another species. No factual justification for such assumptions has ever been established.

In other civilizations where social stratification is not so formal and traditional and where the social order rests presumably on free competition between individuals, men frequently have assumed that the biologically superior types will be found in the higher classes. Are the individuals who make up the "higher" social and economic classes in such a civilization as our own necessarily biologically superior to individuals outside these circles? The evidence does not support such a blanket conclusion. Many physically and mentally inferior persons are to be found in the upper strata of modern society, sometimes occupying positions of prominence, merely because they have inherited a family name or a fortune from their ancestors. On the other hand, our national history is marked by conspicuous cases of persons whose parents have occupied a relatively low social and economic status, but who have demonstrated remarkable personal ability in contrast with the lowly position of their family. About the only thing one can conclude is that, under conditions of equal opportunity and free competition, the individuals who have risen to high positions possess good biological capacities. However, persons who do not achieve success are not necessarily inferior biological types. Misfortune or lack of opportunity may have prevented their attainment of higher positions. Under a genuine competitive

system one would normally expect a higher percentage of more capable persons in the upper classes, but further conclusions appear hazardous and unjustified.

### **Biological differences and individual behavior**

No one disputes the fact of individual biological differences between members of a local population. Obviously any heavy-weight athlete has a physical body superior to that of Tom Thumb, the midget, at least for certain purposes. Unquestionably some persons have excellent brains, while others lack sufficient mental capacity to perform even the most simple acts for themselves. At the lower end of the scale of mentality one finds idiots and imbeciles who require constant care throughout their lives. There is no need to labor the subject; it is quite evident that, physically and mentally, men are not born equal. Present interest centers in the question as to how far such biological differences help to explain human behavior.

Individual biological differences do not necessarily determine the form of social behavior of a person. The type of behavior or the field of activity which is selected by the individual will, indeed, be limited by his physical and mental capacities, but his behavior may assume any pattern or form within the limits of his capacity.

The relation of the mental quality of feeble-mindedness to the form of behavior designated as crime may serve to illustrate the lack of direct relation of biological factors to differences in individual behavior. A man who is feeble-minded does not, because of his feeble-mindedness, tend more strongly toward criminal behavior than the man who is of average mentality. The feeble-minded person is led more easily in any direction by the person of superior mentality, and his tendency toward or away from criminal behavior depends primarily on the patterns that are set for him, rather than on his mental traits. It is true that the statistics of our penal institutions show a higher proportion of mental deficient than is characteristic of the total population. This higher proportion of feeble-minded inmates may be due to the fact that the mentally deficient offender is more likely to be caught and convicted.

Then, too, under our competitive social system the mentally defective persons are more likely to be forced to live in the less desirable sections of the city where disapproved social patterns are set for them. They are more likely to come into contact with vicious and criminal elements than they would if they lived in better residential areas. One would expect, therefore, that a larger than average number of feeble-minded persons would be led into delinquency, but he should not conclude from this fact that feeble-mindedness *per se* is a major cause of crime.

Some reformers, known as eugenisists, have emphasized the fact that an individual cannot be an efficient citizen of any group without a minimum biological equipment. They have, therefore, proposed methods for the elimination of the unfit through the control of mating. The implications and applications of a eugenics program cannot, however, be discussed in this chapter.

A number of psychologists have established the fact of close connection between physiological condition and behavior. They have proved that the physical condition of a person gives tone to his entire system and exerts tremendous influences upon his social relations. Especially do the various internal glands prove important in determining the character and temperament of the individual. Some psychologists have even classified men into biological types, which they believe indicate certain qualities of personality.

Without in any way disputing the conclusions of the psychologists that biological condition is a tremendous fact in the life of every individual, the student of culture insists that the everyday forms of social behavior found within any civilization may be profitably studied and explained in terms of the accumulation and inculcation of social heritage rather than as the direct and immediate result of the biological condition of the individual members.

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Certain conclusions have emerged from our discussion of the effect of biological factors in culture, which may be stated



in summary form. In the course of biological evolution man diverged from other species of the animal world and, in the process, acquired distinctive physical and mental characteristics. These unique traits made it possible for him to develop culture and to become human. As to the degree of advancement reached by a particular culture, the biological differences between groups of men have played a less important part than has ordinarily been supposed—the determining forces in cultural development being that complex set of influences emerging from the whole course of the history of a people. Within the limits of a given society, the biological appetites furnish the basic motives which drive man to action. The nature of his biological equipment both gives an individual the capacity for social behavior and sets limits on what he can do. The form of an individual's behavior, however, is determined not so much by his biological equipment as by the culture which he assimilates in the course of his social life, particularly during his long period of plastic infancy. The forms into which his appetites, thoughts, desires, and ways of acting are cast depend not so much upon his race, sex, or mental capacity as upon the culture of the groups in which he lives, and particularly upon the social roles which he plays or to which he aspires.

Man's superior biological nature has laid the basis for the development of his culture. Once his culture heritage has developed, however, it tends to free man from the tyranny of his animal body and to enable him to act upon a plane different from that of the beasts. Man's biological superiority helps to explain the growth of the culture heritage, but once culture has accumulated, this social heritage rather than the biological body becomes the immediately important factor in any explanation of everyday human life.

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## GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE

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**M**AN'S BIOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT is the first requisite to the creation and development of culture or civilization, but obviously this is not the whole explanation of civilization. The urge to use that equipment arises in the first instance out of man's inescapable need of satisfying biological wants directly related to his survival, and these biological wants can be satisfied only as man applies his powers to ward off destructive forces of nature and to utilize nature's gifts. Hence the natural environment is a constant challenge to man, and civilization to a considerable degree results from the interplay between man's powers and the world of nature about him. In the influences that arise from that interplay we have an important key to an understanding of the process by which civilization develops. It is that interplay that we wish to examine in this discussion of geographic factors in the growth, change, and spread of culture.

The study of natural environment as related to human society traces back to ancient beginnings. In fact, more than 2300 years ago, Herodotus, a noted Greek scholar and "Father of History," wrote extensively about the customs and religions of peoples and the lands that he visited. During the fourth century B. C., Hippocrates in his *Airs, Waters, and Places*, and the great philosopher Aristotle in his *Politics* and



*Four Books of Meteorology* further presented a large amount of material in regard to natural environment and man. During the first century B. C., Strabo, most famous geographer of antiquity, wrote the first general treatise on geography, a book that was based on extensive travel. His works disclosed the relationship between environment and man in various regions. Another important contributor was Claudius Ptolemy, an Egyptian astronomer, geographer, and mathematician, who, during the second century A. D., prepared the *Guide to Geography*, a work on maps that was destined to play an important role in further increasing the knowledge about various lands and their inhabitants—in spite of the fact that explorers later found that some of the maps were inaccurate.

### Component parts of natural environment

The factors of the environment, commonly called “geographic influences,” have been classified in different ways and presented in diverse combinations. For simplicity, we may consider the following: (1) climate, including precipitation, temperature, winds, and barometric pressure; (2) natural resources, including soil, minerals, waters, natural vegetation, and native animal life; (3) land forms; and (4) space relationships, of which relative and fixed location, size, and form are the important aspects.<sup>1</sup>

Three of these factors—climate, land forms, and space relationships—are universal and persistent; whereas the natural resources are latent until called into play by man. All places have a location in relation to other places and in relation to environmental features, a climate, and some types of land form. On the other hand, not all parts of the world have native plants and animals. Some areas contain valuable coal measures and petroleum deposits; while other places lack these minerals. Moreover, man changes the natural resources of the world to meet the needs of changing conditions. Unlike plants and animals, man adapts himself actively rather than passively in the utilization of the resources about him.

<sup>1</sup>E. C. Case, and D. R. Bergsmark, *College Geography* (John Wiley and Sons, 1932), Introduction.

He has become the great earth-changer, the creator of cultural superstructures on the foundations provided by nature.

These features of the natural environment—climate, natural resources, land forms, and space relations—have been a primary influence on the individual and collective life of man since culture began. A climate that favors human health and mental activity is essential to continued cultural progress. It has been well established that energy level, body growth, speed of development, and resistance to infection are closely related to climate. Some climates are stimulating; others are debilitating. In addition, an environment favored with varied and abundant natural resources has made it possible for man to create a surplus of wealth, thus relieving a part of the population from the constant struggle of "making a living." This creation of a leisure class has played an important role in the cultural progress of peoples. Land forms, as part of the physical environment, may be of such character as to promote or retard the advance of civilization. The major land forms, such as plains, mountains, and plateaus, constitute a diverse geographical base for human activities. Where invigorating climate, well-balanced resources, a central location, and favorable land forms combine, man has made the greatest progress.

How each of these component parts of the natural environment operates in the process of developing and spreading civilization is the subject which next claims attention.

### SOME EFFECTS OF CLIMATE

As one of the factors of the environment, climate sets broad limits to the possible range of human activities for any given region and for the world as a whole. Approximately one-half of the world's land area is too wet, too dry, or too cold to support more than a few people per square mile of land (see map). Within the cultivable parts of the world, climate sets the limits for the production of certain crops, as reflected in the well-defined areas of citriculture, viticulture, banana culture, wheat culture, etc. Thus, climatic differences help to explain world trade. For example, the Spring Wheat Belt

has a surplus of wheat but lacks citrus fruits; whereas our Cotton Belt has a surplus of cotton but a deficiency of many other agricultural products. Moreover, climate exerts a direct influence upon human energy.

### **Climate and human energy**

Human energy, a fundamental factor in the cultural development of peoples, is in large measure climatically conditioned; that is, the degree of human energy is closely related to climate. No matter how great the resources of a country may be, the inhabitants of that country cannot make real progress unless they are physically and mentally active. We are all aware of the contrasts so often brought out between the lazy inhabitants of the tropics and the energetic peoples of the temperate zone. The latter may experience at short intervals during summer what the natives of the humid tropics have to contend with the year round and from year to year.

After devoting many years to the study of climate and man, Dr. Ellsworth Huntington has found an abundance of statistical evidence concerning this relationship.<sup>1</sup> Statistical studies indicate that in factories in the northeastern United States, where employees were told to work as fast as they liked and were encouraged to work fast by bonuses, marked increases in output were experienced at those times of the year that were cool rather than either hot or cold. At such times the workers felt stronger of body and more alert and active of mind.

It is a fact of world-wide observation and study that the great masses of natives living in humid tropical and subtropical regions are less active in mind and body than are the inhabitants of cool, stormy regions. In the latter, bodily vigor is great, while in regions of stagnant, moist heat man becomes sluggish and less able to meet physical emergencies.

In the hot lands, one of man's greatest physiologic problems is that of losing body heat. Difficulty in losing body heat is reflected in the inability of the natives of the humid tropics

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<sup>1</sup> Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilization and Climate* (Yale University Press), 1924.



to do hard, sustained work, either mental or physical. Dr. Mills, Professor of Experimental Medicine at the University of Cincinnati, expresses the physiologic effects as follows: "When body heat loss becomes difficult the entire metabolism of the individual is suppressed—growth is slower, maturity is delayed, resistance to infection falls, and in all ways existence is on a plane of lower vitality." The harder the tropical native works the more difficult becomes his problem of body heat loss. Difficulty in getting rid of this body heat will cause the natives to avoid the expenditure of much physical and mental energy.

Associated with energy level and bodily vigor is resistance to infection. Moist heat that depresses bodily functions makes tropical natives susceptible to infection and lessens their ability to fight bacterial action. If it were not for the poor sanitary conditions in many tropical areas and the high death rate by reason of infectious diseases, tropical natives would probably show a decidedly long life span.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to peoples of the temperate zone, they experience less wear and tear on the body since they are subject to greater body relaxation and a lesser degree of "climatic drive." It is, therefore, not surprising that early civilizations were developed in the subtropical areas and the poleward parts of the tropics where the resistances offered by climate were slight, especially in regard to satisfying man's material or primary needs.

It is in the temperate zone that the areas of "climatic drive" are to be found. A high level of body-heat production is necessitated in the cool, stormy regions of the world, especially where there are sudden and wide changes in temperature, such as those associated with the passage of highs (anticyclones) and lows (cyclones) in the northern United States. That the body-heat production level is determined by the environmental temperature, increasing as the outside temperature is lowered, has been well established by students of science.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Mills finds that body-heat production and energy level are

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<sup>1</sup>Statement of Dr. Clarence Mills in a lecture to the Geological Seminar group.

<sup>2</sup>S. Gelineo, "*Influence du Milieu Thermique d'Adaptation sur la Thermogénèse des Homeothermes*," *Ann. de Physiol.* Vol. X, p. 1083 (1934).

at all times interdependent, and that life's activities that depend on energy level are therefore conditioned by climate.<sup>1</sup> Thus energy, whether it be for accomplishment or for bodily growth, appears to be linked to body-heat production, and reaches its high points in the cool climatic regions in which there are sudden changes in temperature. These changes cause increased metabolism and quickened reflexes, and the whole tension of existence rises to a high level. On the other hand, moist heat, especially when continuous, depresses body metabolism.

What is the most favorable climatic condition relative to human activity? According to Ellsworth Huntington and others, man is most active where the atmosphere is moist, the weather changeable, and the temperature range is from 40°F. to 70°F. In general, these conditions are found in the marine regions of the world (west coasts in higher middle latitudes), notably in western Europe. Statistical studies have shown that man is physically most active when the temperatures average about 64°F., and mentally most alert when the temperatures are about 40°F. With the development of civilization, man is depending more and more upon mental alertness and relatively less on his physical strength as such. It is therefore of significance to note the gradual poleward movement of our modern industrial civilization.<sup>2</sup> Large cities, such as New York, Chicago, London, Paris, and Berlin are located in cyclonic storm regions and have a mean annual temperature average of only 50°F. However, as we shall see presently, there are also other bases for the development of our industrial civilization in these areas of abundant climatic energy.

Temperatures of 55° to 70°F. are approximately those of the summer season in marine regions and 40°F. is approximately the winter average for the equatorward half of the marine regions. The spring and fall temperatures of the northeastern United States approximate the yearly temperatures of

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<sup>1</sup>C. A. Mills, "Health and Disease as Influenced by Climatic Environment," *International Clinics* (J. B. Lippincott Co.), Vol. II, Series 46, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup>S. C. Gil Fillan: "The Coldward Course of Progress," *Political Science Quarterly*, 1920, pp. 393-410.

western Europe, but the summers and winters in the United States show greater extremes. Because of this greater degree of climatic variability and by reason of the greater frequency of storms, the American region is more stimulating in climate. These two areas comprise what are known as the great climatic energy regions of the world.

### **Climate as related to diet**

That the character of diet plays a part in man's growth and energy cannot be denied, since there is an abundance of evidence concerning increased stature and better physique associated with higher standards of diet. The people who have developed the healthiest bodies and the best minds are those who have been able to get a balanced food supply, especially of proteids, fats, and carbohydrates. A balanced diet is generally lacking in both the arctic and the humid tropical regions. For example, the primitive Eskimos live almost wholly on fats and proteids, and their bodies get but little of the carbohydrates that temperate-zone peoples obtain in sweets and vegetables. On the other hand, the tropics furnish an abundant supply of carbohydrates in the widely cultivated plantain, sugar cane, and tropical tubers. Yet there is generally a deficiency of proteids in the diet of the native of the humid tropics. The inhabitants of these regions are often so indolent that they do not exert themselves sufficiently to get the proteids that they need. Moreover, animals suitable for human consumption are narrowly limited in some tropical areas by reason of deadly insect pests, such as the tsetse fly of Africa, one of the greatest scourges of man and animals on that continent.

In the development of human society, early man could best obtain a balanced diet in the northern part of the tropics, the southern parts of the north temperate zone, and the regions where these merge to form the subtropics. The first great civilizations developed in such areas. The subtropical Mediterranean basin of the Old World was one of the areas most favorable for the early development of civilizations.

At the present time, however, the subtropical and tropical



regions do not show such well-balanced diets among the masses of its people as one will find in most parts of the United States and in parts of western Europe. The latter regions, which are in the stormy or cyclonic areas of the temperate zone, are the only places where the masses of the people have access not only to the basic foods rich in fats and carbohydrates but also to a great variety of juicy fruits and leafy vegetables.<sup>1</sup> In most other areas of the commercial world where fruits and vegetables are consumed, these tend to be of the starchy type.

Statistical studies have been made of the rate of growth in height and weight of school children in various regions of the world. These studies show that growth is most rapid in the storm areas of the temperate zone, notably the northern United States and northwestern Europe. There is also statistical evidence concerning children who have come from tropical and subtropical regions and have been reared in the northern United States. At maturity these children surpass in height and weight the native youngsters who remain in the areas from which the migrant children came. This greater growth has been attributed to a better-balanced diet in the northern United States, and undoubtedly diet plays a part. Experiments with white mice have proved that moist heat interferes with body growth in animals in a way comparable to that for human growth. In these experiments all the groups of mice received an ample supply of food. There is consequently some basis for the belief that the slower body development of tropical and subtropical people may be due in part to the depressing influence of heat.

#### **Long-range fluctuations in climate**

In studying the records of the past one finds good inferential evidence that civilizations have at times come under the influence of climatic fluctuations, especially of long cycles in storminess and rainfall. Unfortunately, we lack long-time statistical records of temperature, humidity, winds, and barometric pressure; but we may find evidences of past climatic cycles extending over hundreds of years by studying the yearly

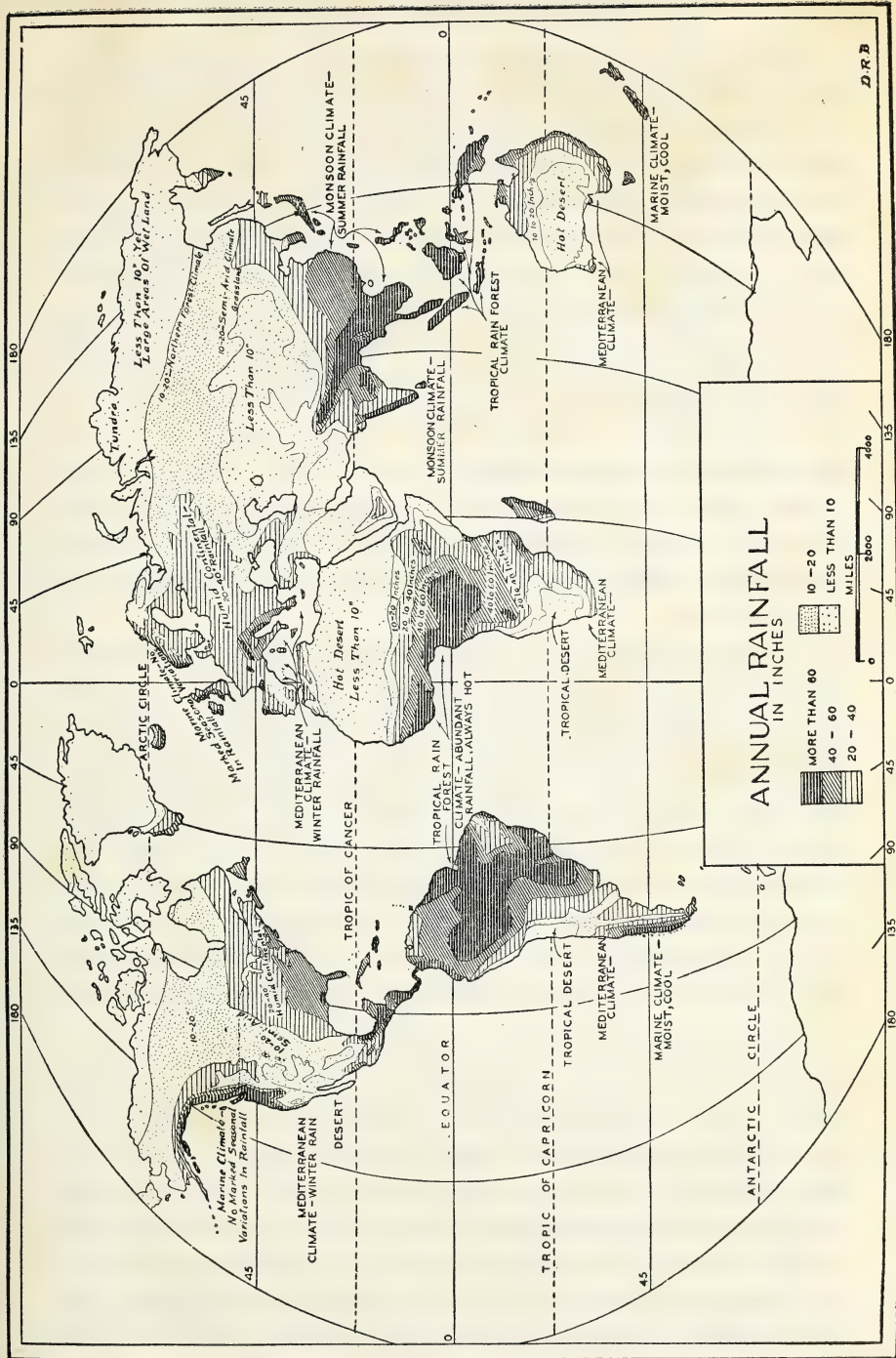
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<sup>1</sup>Case and Bergsmark, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

growths or rings shown in the cross-sections of old trees, such as the giant sequoias of California, which provide us with a picture of climatic variations in the southwestern United States through a period of some 3000 years. By reason of their location, these trees also give us a clue to the climatic cycles in the Mediterranean region of the Old World together with its neighboring desert and steppe. Study of the variations in the level of bodies of water such as the Caspian Sea, situated roughly in the same zonal location as California, and of the character of ancient ruins affords evidence of long-time climatic cycles.

During the first period of the Christian era the sequoias of California grew rapidly, a fact indicated by their thick tree rings for that interval, and along the shores of the Caspian Sea old records on ancient towers and other features indicate a water level about 85 feet higher than the present one. The "big trees" and the lake levels disclose a greater rainfall, which in the Caspian area is generally associated with more frequent cyclonic storms and more marked variability in temperature. As we have already seen, the latter must have caused an increase in human energy; the greater rainfall made possible a more successful agriculture, the chief occupation of early Mediterranean peoples. There was a plentiful supply of food for the local communities and a surplus for armies. Even the pastoral nomads in the adjacent desert and steppe could increase their herds and flocks.

This invigorating climate continued for nearly a century after Christ, and it was followed by a drier period for another hundred years. But the latter period was only relatively drier than the preceding one, and the trend, though irregular, was one of reduced rainfall and storminess for several hundred years, until the seventh and eighth centuries A. D., when this region experienced extremes of drought. The "big trees" show thin rings, and the water of the Caspian Sea sank about one hundred feet below the level established at the beginning of the Christian Era. This prolonged period of dryness affected the sedentary agricultural peoples, making it difficult for them to obtain food, pay their taxes, and in general



1. MAP SHOWING AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL AND THE RELATIVE LOCATIONS OF CERTAIN CLIMATIC REGIONS



satisfy their material wants. In the neighboring steppe and desert, pasture grasses withered; watering holes dried up; some of the irrigation centers were abandoned; and the pastoral nomads, faced with starvation, made frequent raids on the sedentary agriculturists. In fact, the seventh and eighth centuries A. D. witnessed the greatest of all outpourings of desert nomads. At this time, the Arabs, under the influence of the Mohammedan religion, overwhelmed the neighboring areas, and by the year 750 A. D. Mohammedan rule had been extended from the Indo-Gangetic plain of India to the Iberian Peninsula of southwestern Europe.

### **Man's efforts to adjust to climate**

With his rise in civilization man has learned how to mitigate the extremes of climatic influence. People have made remarkable improvements in clothing, shelter, heating, and refrigeration.

Clothing is worn by all peoples living outside the tropical regions, and even within those regions the natives wear some clothing, especially as a protection from insects. In some places ashes are rubbed on the body to protect it from insect pests. We can well imagine our early ancestors in Europe and Asia seeking protection in winter by using the uncured pelts of animals before they learned the art of curing and tanning skins. Although protection from the weather is an important reason why people wear clothing, it appears that love of adornment also plays a part; and, beginning with the Renaissance, fashions became an increasingly important factor.

All over the world people have constructed dwellings in which they may protect themselves against cold, heat, wind, and enemies. The thick-walled, and in places well-insulated, houses of cold continental climates contrast strikingly with the flimsy thatch-covered huts of the humid tropics. In the desert the sedentary dwellers commonly build thick-walled, flat-roofed adobe houses. In a region of abundant rainfall most of those dwellings would soon crumble into heaps of mud, and the flat roof would be less serviceable than a sloping one. In the

desert of Egypt, archaeologists have uncovered foundations and fragments of dwellings of sun-baked clay. These finds indicate that the houses of early Egypt differed but little from those of the present-day Egyptian peasants. That houses have long been built also as shelter against enemies is suggested by the early English term, *shield-troop*, from which the word *shelter* was derived.

By means of heat and refrigeration man may mitigate temperature extremes. The effective use of natural resources, especially combustible fuels, has made it possible for people to conquer the low temperatures of northern winters. In fact, tropical heat may be provided continuously during the cold season. Why, then, do we not decline in energy, as do tropical peoples? The answer is that we generally make many excursions into the cold winter air and are therefore exposed to quick changes in temperature, which are highly stimulating.

### SOME SPECIFIC EFFECTS OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A second major factor in culture growth is the availability of natural resources. The relation of the natural environment to the rise of the earliest civilizations in the Near East is observable. The civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia based their success largely on the effective use of soil and water resources. Both of these areas are dry lands, where warm valleys such as those of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile contain excellent unleached soils that have developed in alluvial materials washed from the adjacent highlands. These soils were renewed in fertility with the annual overflow of the rivers. Here fertile alluvial lands became the geographical base for agricultural operations. In these dry regions, progress in agriculture depended largely on effective use of the river waters for the production of crops, and there the first steps were taken in the development of irrigation. Since irrigation calls for coöperation on the part of those who use the irrigation waters, it was an important step in the development of civilization. The intensive cultivation of the soil necessitated a closer settlement than was possible in the adjacent pastoral

regions, and mankind evolved more rapidly under the stimulus of a more highly interactive life.<sup>1</sup> Since there were seasonal fluctuations in stream flow that caused variations in crop production, seasons of plenty were followed by seasons of dearth, compelling man to practice forethought and saving; that is, man found it essential to store goods for the period of deficiency. The need of storing food for the season of dearth also manifested itself in the great monsoon lands of Asia, in which the civilizations of India and China evolved.

Our modern industrial civilization has reached its greatest heights where there are varied and abundant natural resources with which man can readily satisfy his material needs; where the utilization of resources is such that there is leisure time in which to pursue the higher needs—mental, spiritual, and aesthetic—and thereby to further the development of culture in its finest sense; and where climate is a stimulus to health and energy, and therefore has made possible a high degree of efficiency in satisfying the material as well as the higher needs of man.

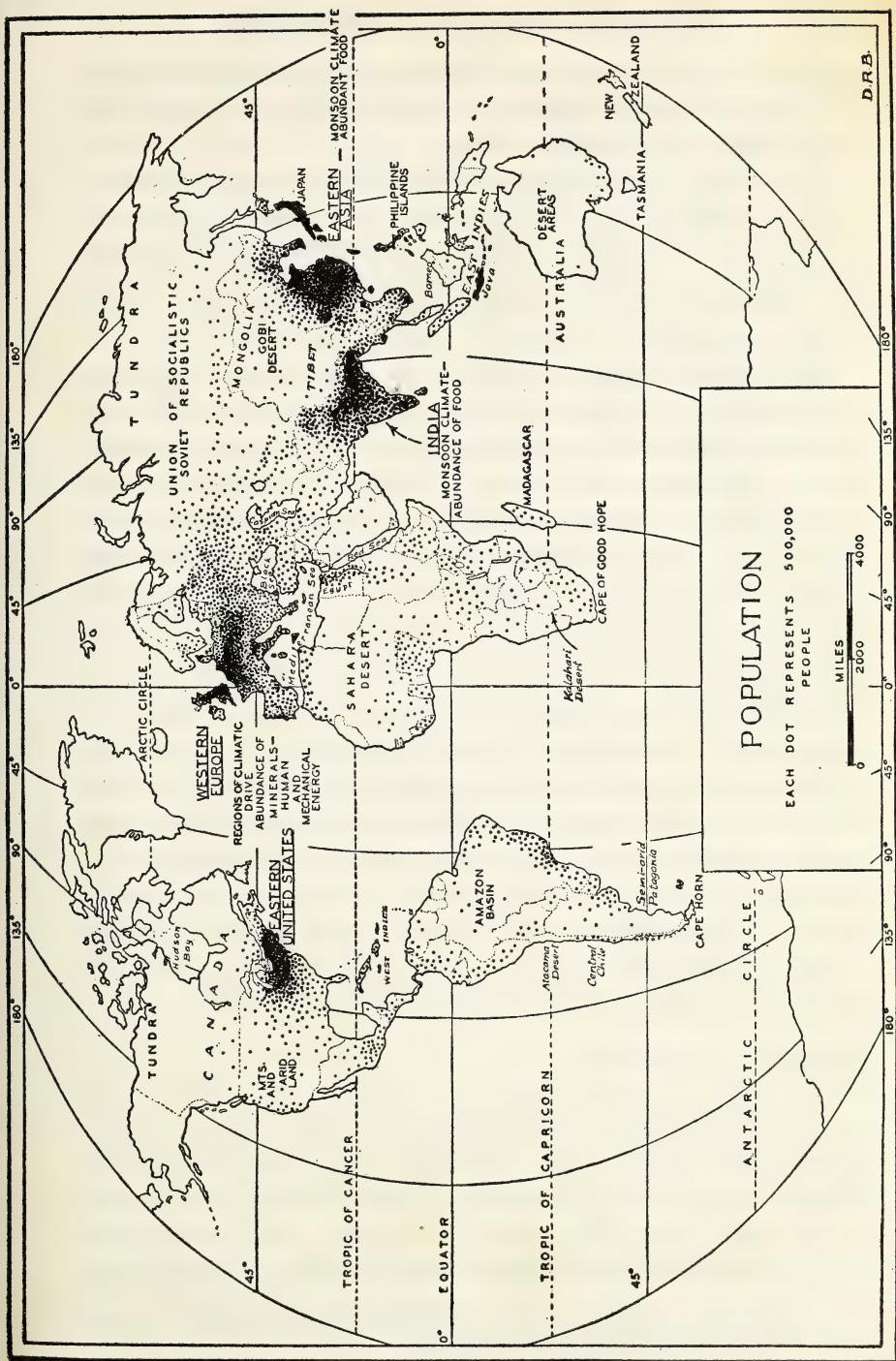
### Resources and population distribution

In general, the character of resources and resource patterns reflects the possibilities of a region for the support of population. Some regions have been well endowed by nature; others have but a few conditions that attract people. On a map of the world showing population distribution, four major areas stand out from all the rest—eastern United States, western Europe, India, and eastern Asia. These are areas of population concentration and are often called “the four great human agglomerations.” Their combined area covers only one-tenth of the world’s land surface, yet their combined population includes more than two-thirds of the world’s total. Although all four areas have abundant resources with which to sustain human life, the Occidental areas are the most favored in regard to factors that are essential to our industrial civilization. The eastern United States and western Europe are

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<sup>1</sup>D. R. Bergsmark, *Economic Geography of Asia* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1935), pp. 5, 6.





2. MAP SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION AND THE MAJOR AREAS OF CONCENTRATION, THE "HUMAN AGGLOMERATIONS"

regions of an abundance of human and mechanical energy, whereas the Asiatic regions are the world's great monsoon lands, regions of abundant food.

In contrast to these densely populated regions are the essentially unusable ice-covered areas and desert lands. In addition, there are regions of slight development, where human settlements are widely scattered. Among the latter regions one will find the steppe, tropical savannas, tropical forests, and the vast expanse of taiga, or boreal forest.

Since nearly all parts of the world have been brought into some degree of commercial contact, it appears to be *physically possible* to support a population in almost any geographical area. Examples come readily to mind. There are valuable mining districts situated in desolate areas in the western United States that depend almost completely on outside regions to supply food and other necessities of life. Again, in the nitrate-producing area of the Atacama desert of northern Chile, nearly all the food and clothing, the building material, machinery, and work animals have to be drawn from more favored lands, in exchange for sodium nitrate.<sup>1</sup> These instances illustrate the fact that a region lacking a variety of resources but possessing some special resource in demand elsewhere, in the production of which the region has a comparative advantage over other areas, may obtain the materials that it lacks by means of exchange for the products of its one resource. Communities would be prevented from springing up in such regions only if transportation costs were so high as to make their maintenance from outside *impracticable*.

### Resources and inventions

In utilizing his natural environment, man, like animals and plants, will follow certain methods or established ways, commonly called techniques. But unlike those of plants and animals, human techniques are active rather than passive, alterable rather than unalterable. In human society techniques are invented, and from time to time man has found entirely

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah Bowman, "Regional Population Groups of the Atacama," *American Geographical Society Bulletin*, Vol. 41, p. 153.

new methods of utilizing natural resources. Thus inventions have altered resource patterns, created new cultural superstructures, and caused marked changes in the ecological scheme.<sup>1</sup>

Inventions tend to follow diverse paths of development in various parts of the world by reason of differences (1) in stage of civilization, (2) in attitude toward material progress, (3) in needs, and (4) in natural resources.<sup>2</sup> Among the highly industrialized nations of the Occident, differences in inventive achievements are due mainly to differences in needs and natural resources. For example, although western Europe as a whole is a close counterpart of the United States in abundance and variety of resources, no single European nation can match the natural resources of this country. Yet the population density of the United States is only 43 per square mile, in contrast to approximately 500 in the United Kingdom, more than 350 in Germany, and even greater densities in The Netherlands and Belgium. In America with its vast extent and its varied natural resources almost superabundant in proportion to its population, problems pertaining to labor and transportation have arisen, and her inventors have concentrated their efforts on time-saving and labor-saving machinery. In the crowded regions of western Europe, on the other hand, greater attention has been devoted to material-saving devices. For example, Germany, with a paucity of petroleum in her underlying rock formations, has devoted considerable inventive effort to the production of substitutes, such as synthetic gasoline from low-grade coal. She possesses the world's largest readily available reserve of potash, but lacks natural deposits of rock phosphate and nitrate. Her scientists have found substitutes for the last two of these mineral fertilizers. At the present time Germany satisfies not only her own requirements for fertilizers but has a surplus for export, most of which is consumed in neighboring countries. The effective use of these materials in the cropping

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<sup>1</sup>O. Spangler, *Man and Technique: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1932), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Erich W. Zimmermann, *World Resources and Industries* (Harper and Brothers, 1933), pp. 24-37.



systems of various western European nations has been a major factor in causing the remarkable increase in crop yields since the middle of last century.

### **Cultural significance of mineral resources**

The material progress of civilization has been closely associated with the use of minerals, as suggested by such descriptive terms as "Stone Age," "Bronze Age," "Iron Age," and "Steel Age," the last being sometimes used to designate our modern industrial civilization. But in spite of the long time during which man has used these resources of nature, the vast storehouse of world minerals remained practically untouched until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Since that time man has increased his use of resources at an extremely rapid rate, until at present highly industrialized nations have found important uses for more than one hundred minerals; have, in fact, found them necessary to a well-rounded economic development. The centers of early civilizations had sufficient reserves of the few minerals that were used to satisfy their narrowly limited requirements, whereas our present large-scale industrial enterprises call for abundant and varied reserves, which the old centers of civilization do not possess. The principal mineral reserves are found in the countries bordering the North Atlantic, notably in the United States and western Europe.

The degree of human energy available in any country is, as has been shown, closely related to climatic conditions; the degree of mechanical energy that can be readily developed is closely related to mineral fuels and power resources. Since human energy alone is not sufficient for the development of an outstanding industrial civilization, those countries which have an abundance of both human and mechanical energy are favored in the race for industrial leadership. In our study of climate, we found that the northeastern United States and western Europe are the leading energy zones. These are also the great regions of mechanical energy. No other areas of comparable size in the world can boast an array of fuel and power resources that in variety, extent, quality, and availa-

bility can compare with those of western Europe and north-eastern United States.

### **Distribution of resources as a factor in community relations**

From the time of the earliest barter known to man, the unequal distribution of natural resources has been one of the basic causes of trade. The unequal distribution of flint during the Stone Age was probably an important factor in the barter of the prehistoric period; the scattered sources of tin and copper during the Bronze Age stimulated trade during the ancient period over a wide area from Cyprus to the British Isles. Mere mention of the amber of the Baltic, the spices and gems of the Orient, the ivory of Africa, the gold and silver of the Andes, brings to mind important trade that centered about these regions and commodities at various times in the past. Under modern conditions the areas of highly localized production have increased in number. Some commodities are found only in a few areas, which supply all other parts of the commercial world. For example, quebracho tanning materials are obtained in commercial quantities only in the Gran Chaco of South America; teak comes from the monsoonal lands of southeastern Asia; most of the world's molybdenum is produced in the United States; and all of the natural sodium nitrate of commerce comes from the tropical desert of northern Chile.

The unequal distribution of mineral resources, along with other raw materials, is one of the basic reasons for disputes and conflicts among nations. This fact is well illustrated by the struggle for the control of Europe's largest iron ore deposits, in Lorraine; the large coal field of the Saar; the coal, lead, zinc, and smaller deposits of iron ore and silver of Upper Silesia. Similarly, Italy's conquest of Ethiopia, Japan's interests in Manchukuo, and Germany's concern over the Sudeten area of Czechoslovakia involved basically the question of mineral resources. Quite frequently the struggle for a foreign territory takes place under the guise of some other cause, such as ethnographic considerations or the curbing of bandit raids, but the basic cause is probably the desire to obtain or have

assured access to additional resources. The urge to obtain colonies is not simply a question of more territory as such, and the dissatisfaction of the "have-nots" does not involve merely the desire to increase the area under their control.

### **Relation of types of resources to occupations**

Types of resources and types of occupations tend to go together, and the relation between the two is causal. This fact is impressively exemplified in the basic or extractive industries, such as hunting, fishing, lumbering, grazing, agriculture, and mining. Clearly, hunters will exploit areas in which native animal resources are found. For the world as a whole, commercial hunting is associated with the great forested belts which are located, in general, along the margins of the permanently settled areas, as well as beyond them. The world's leading fisheries are found in the areas of shallows or "banks" and in the inshore districts of the northwestern and northeastern coastal regions of North America and Eurasia. The percentage of working population engaged in fishing increases with distance northward along these coasts. The percentage of working population engaged in the exploitation of timber is highest in the humid forested sections of the commercial world, notably the marine, continental, and northern coniferous forest climates. Grazing is the dominant occupation, the chief source of wealth, in the semiarid grasslands and the non-irrigated expanses of desert. Most crops do best on well-drained, level to rolling land surface, where there are fertile soils, and where there is a moist, warm growing season; hence the major agricultural areas of the commercial world are the extensive humid lowlands of the middle latitudes. These lowlands also contain valuable minerals, notably mineral fuels. Important minerals and mining industries, however, are found in many mid-latitude highlands that are unimportant in the production of crops.

It has often been observed that whole communities bear the stamp of the occupational type. Communities which exploit the natural grasslands by means of flocks and herds are commonly called pastoral communities; those which subsist by exploiting



natural fauna are known as besticultural; those which exploit minerals are called saxicultural; and the areas which exploit timber resources are called nemoricultural communities. Similarly, there are agricultural, manufactural, commercial, and service communities. Thus it appears that as human beings are placed in this or that environmental setting they are led to cultivate crops, pasture herds and flocks, cut timber, dig minerals, or engage in some other characteristic occupation. Yet pure occupational areas are rare, since one finds a variety of occupations in most communities. Moreover, the dominant occupations often change in the course of time as the communities adjust themselves not only to local conditions, but also to a variety of local, national, and international conditions. Thus, many humid forested areas, notably in the United States and Europe, have been first predominantly besticultural, then nemoricultural, and finally agricultural.

#### **Conservation of natural resources**

Continued national prosperity of a highly industrialized country is based not only on the abundance, quality, and variety of soil, plant, animal, water, and mineral resources, but also on the intelligent utilization and protection of these natural assets for their fullest use. In a new country there is often much waste. Exulting in their seemingly boundless resources, the people of the United States have considered lightly the needs of future generations. Impoverishment of many valuable resources, in part by unwise selection for use, and in part by improper method of use, has become a real handicap to the nation's future welfare. Many authorities believe that we cannot expect to have a "permanent country" if the exploitation of our natural resources is allowed to proceed along as wasteful lines as in the past. In some respects our nation has been shrinking considerably. Today, fur-bearing animals are to be found in quantities only in the more remote localities, and mere fragments remain of the great pine and hardwood forests; in fact, two-thirds of our original timber is gone, largely by reason of forest fires and destructive methods of logging. Forests are replaceable; but

our mineral resources, once exhausted, can never be replaced. Notwithstanding, mines have often been worked by wasteful methods. Natural gas and petroleum have been ruthlessly exploited. The daily waste of natural gas is much greater than the amount of that substance consumed each day in the United States. Estimates indicate that each year water and wind erosion together remove beyond use about three billion tons of soil and that the single dust storm of May 11, 1934, swept 300 million tons of fertile topsoil off the Great Plains.

For this destructive erosion man is in part responsible. In his ruthless exploitation of resources he has often violated basic arrangements in the physical and biological environment, and has interfered with the balance of forces between environment and living organisms.

### SOME EFFECTS OF LAND FORMS

#### **The relation of land forms to culture growth**

On a relief map the student can trace much of the story of human activity; for plains, mountains, and plateaus have had an important place in the dynamics of civilization. Plains furnished the geographic setting for the early civilizations, and they have continued to exert an influence on culture growth throughout history. The Nile plains of Egypt and the plains of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers are definitely related to the beginnings of high civilizations. Likewise noteworthy and significant have been the plains of western Europe and the plains of the United States. Plains have advantages over other land forms by reason of their high percentage of cultivable land and their comparatively level surface, which facilitates the development of transportation, often by means of navigable rivers and canals. In highlands the land surface is commonly more rugged, the drainage (air and water) is more rapid, the climate is colder, and the area of waste land is usually greater than that of adjacent plains. Moreover, massive mountains constitute the most marked natural barriers that man encounters on the land surface of the earth. They stand as obstacles to the building of roads and railroads, to commercial intercourse, to the movement of armies, and to the

spread of population. In North America the Appalachians tended for a long period to keep the English colonists cooped up on the Atlantic seaboard and cut off contact with the Middle West. Very severely dissected highlands may contain interior districts which have an inferior location relative to other places. For example, in the "mountains" of eastern Kentucky many of the interior valleys have a narrowly limited land use, and by reason of their isolation social progress has been retarded. In such geographic situations we have the chief explanation for the development of undesirable qualities in the social life of the inhabitants, such as family feuds, lack of respect for outside authority, clannishness, and the dislike of strangers. There is also a tendency to preserve traditional manners and the original language, and improvement in living conditions is retarded.

In still other ways land barriers have affected the history of civilization. In some areas highlands have become natural boundaries between nations, protecting one against invasions from another. For centuries the Alps acted as a barrier between Italy and central Europe, and they have ever been a strong natural defense of Swiss liberty. The Pyrenees shut off Spain from the rest of Europe so effectively that it has often been said that Africa begins at the Pyrenees. The defensive advantages of mountains along the frontiers of nations have often made their possession an object of international wars. It is to be noted, too, that it is in mountainous regions that mineral deposits are commonly found, where the strata have become greatly folded and faulted, forming numerous fissures and fractures in which mineral-carrying solutions may form metallic veins. In many places rapid erosion has worn away overlying rock and exposed the minerals, thereby facilitating their exploitation.

#### **Relation of land forms to the spread of culture**

The directions in which culture spreads are influenced by the character of the surrounding land forms. As already indicated, the societies that built the early civilizations chose sites in the lowlands, chiefly in river plains where fertile soil



and water transportation favored human occupancy as well as contact with other regions. Noteworthy were the Indus and Ganges rivers with their associated lowlands in India; the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Mesopotamia; the Nile in Egypt; and the Hwang Ho, Yangtze Kiang, and Si Kiang in China. On the continent of Europe, the Seine, Rhone, Rhine, Oder, Vistula and Dniester river routes were used as thoroughfares even in prehistoric times.<sup>1</sup> In the New World the rivers and streams were the gateways that allowed the early explorers and the colonists to penetrate interior regions, covered in many places by dense and almost trackless forests.

Waterways were of major importance in the development of early Western civilization. After man had learned to navigate streams and rivers, he took to the inland seas, and it was along the great water courses and upon the shores of the eastern Mediterranean that the early civilizations established themselves. The Mediterranean was admirably suited to the needs of early navigation, with its comparatively quiet waters, small tidal range, numerous islands, and well-defined promontories. It was along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean that the commercial towns of the Phoenicians arose, and it was over the waters of the eastern Mediterranean that both Phoenicians and Greeks tapped the trade of the Nile Valley and of Assyria and Babylonia. To the eastward lay the Indian realm which could be reached by way of the Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea, or on the great river highways leading into the Persian Gulf. When, later, civilization moved westward, it took root at favorable points along the shores of the Mediterranean; and in the centuries of Rome's supremacy the Mediterranean became the scene of an extensive commerce tending to bind together the component parts of the Empire. In the closing centuries before the modern era the wealth and splendor of the Italian cities was largely derived from trade with the Orient, which was tapped by the Italians at the trading centers and ports of the Near East. In the sixteenth century the supreme importance of the Mediterranean as a commercial

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<sup>1</sup>H. F. Cleland, "Trade Routes in Prehistoric Europe," *Economic Geography*, Vol. III, pp. 232-238 (1927).











highway gave way to the Atlantic Ocean. Situated at the junction of the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, Spain and Portugal were in a favorable position to inaugurate the era of oceanic transportation. But with the development of the American colonies, the countries of northwestern Europe found themselves at the front door of the new oceanic routes. Commercial supremacy passed to Holland and then to Great Britain, and the North Atlantic trade routes ultimately became the chief arteries of commercial activity between Europe and the rest of the world; the area of greatest commercial activity thus became linked with the great European regions of abundant human and mechanical energy.

### **Enlargement of the field of environmental influences**

The expansion of Western civilization and the extension of commercial activity indicated above suggest roughly the stages by which the field of environmental influences has been tremendously enlarged for the societies involved in the process. The meaning of this aspect of historical development becomes clear if we compare the situation of Stone Age man and of "primitive" communities existing today with the situation of civilized societies in the Western world. The man of the Stone Age was narrowly confined to a limited area of environmental influences. With hand labor and simple tools he wrested a meager livelihood from the resources found in his immediate vicinity. Depletion of animal life, plant life, or soil, or a combination of these, caused him to migrate into other areas. In general, his simple material needs were satisfied with goods that were produced locally. But this type of local economy, characterized by self-sufficiency, has given way to world-wide trade as improved means of communication and transportation have brought diverse regions in contact with one another. This development has been followed closely by an increase in man's wants as well as in his ability to satisfy them, and the relative location (location of one area with reference to other areas) of commercial regions has become a vital factor in their economic growth. To many people, this remarkable evolution of commerce suggests a lesser depend-



ence of man on natural conditions. This, however, is not the case, since relative location is included among the natural conditions. But the ever-increasing interdependence of peoples has made the problem of interpreting man's dependence on those conditions much less direct and clear.

The problems of man himself have also become more complex by reason of the fact that he must adjust himself not only to his immediate surroundings but also to conditions found in other parts of the commercial world. Domestic producers are by no means indifferent to such conditions, and modern man is constantly striving to gain some degree of accurate familiarity with foreign as well as local regions. ✓

### HOW THE CULTURE BASE CONDITIONS GEOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

Some of the most important influences of the natural environment upon the development of civilization have now been considered. But thus far one important feature of the subject has been largely left out of account; that is the role which the cultural heritage of a people plays in determining the character and extent of environmental influences. In an earlier chapter<sup>1</sup> the fact was emphasized that the historical development of culture is conditioned by the cultural background or heritage, designated as the "culture base." Reference to this fact or principle is essential to an understanding of the effect of geographic factors upon a given culture or civilization. Geographic influences affect the character and growth of culture in all regions and at all periods, but the character and extent of the influence upon a given society varies as the society advances in its cultural equipment. In the environment may be found opportunities and handicaps, advantages and disadvantages. In general, advanced peoples will avail themselves of environmental opportunities as well as their knowledge and experience will permit. Their knowledge and experience will be measured by their cultural heritage from the past—that is, by their culture base.

Man's knowledge of his environment and his ability to make

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 30ff.

proper use of it have become increasingly important with the development of civilization. In our own civilization, consider for a moment the greater knowledge of weather, climate, and land surface demanded by the development of aviation; and the range of our information concerning the distribution and character of minerals that has constantly widened, as many minerals unknown to man a hundred years ago have become essential to our modern industrial civilization. The white man's conquest of the tropics offers another illustration of the fact that the influence of the geographic environment is conditioned by the cultural heritage. Certain of the enervating, disease-ridden tropical regions proved highly destructive to human health and energy. White men equipped only with the cultural background of the eighteenth century could make but little progress in those regions. Since that time, however, Pasteur has discovered the existence of deadly germs, medical science has learned how to combat communicable disease, and engineers have developed refrigeration and air-conditioning; and with this new cultural equipment the white man has in large degree conquered the tropics. Within recent years large corporations, whose officials have recognized the importance of these newly acquired additions to knowledge and technology, have adopted the practice of sending in engineers and health experts to make tropical regions habitable before they send in other workers. These illustrations point clearly to the fact that man's power to utilize his environment and to combat the destructive forces of nature is proportionate to the accumulated stock of knowledge that he has inherited from the past; for geographic influences operate through culture.

#### **The utilization of natural resources**

It was pointed out earlier in this chapter that natural resources are latent until they are called into play by man. Obviously, a first requisite to man's utilization of resources is that he shall have a knowledge of their presence in his environment. At the present time there are many primitive peoples who have not advanced to a point where they have any knowledge of many of the valuable resources about them. Moreover, re-

sources should be described as those parts of the environment that are of service to man. Petroleum deposits that lie thousands of feet below the surface in Oklahoma, Texas, and California constitute a valuable resource to present-day Americans, but they were not a resource to the original Indian inhabitants of these areas. In the highly industrialized countries where the heritage of knowledge is adequate to the purpose, thousands of inventions and discoveries are being made that add new materials to the list of resources, and many products of nature that were formerly worthless have become valuable additions to man's material equipment. But it should not be forgotten that the remarkable progress made in the most highly industrialized areas—those in western Europe and the United States—can be largely accounted for by the fact that they possess the best combination of mineral resources suitable for the development of modern industry.

A clear illustration of the relation of the social heritage, or culture base, to the availability of resources is furnished by a comparison, say, between the Chinese and the Germans. The Chinese possess valuable resources which are essentially unavailable to them. China contains one of the world's large coal reserves—a reserve which compares favorably with that of Germany. Yet this resource has scarcely been touched, the average annual output being only one-tenth as large as that of Germany, although the population of China is more than six times as large. In some districts the Chinese have objected to the introduction of power-driven mechanical equipment that competes with human labor. This is especially true in the field of transportation. There is a paucity of modern rail transportation. Goods are transported largely by pack animals, by human carriers, and by wheeled vehicles propelled by human power. Even lumber and heavy timber are often carried long distances on the backs of men, who earn from twenty-five to thirty cents a day. Such transportation, however, is not cheap despite the low wages. In some cases it has been found to be ten times as costly per ton-mile as on an American railway. Germany presents a contrasting picture. There the population has made the most effective use of all



natural resources by the application of the most modern scientific knowledge and technology. How is this contrast to be accounted for? Certainly the answer is not a simple one, but a major factor in the problem is to be found in the differences in the backgrounds of the Germans and the Chinese. An interest in, and an emphasis on, science and technology are a definite and salient feature of the German heritage. Mental attitudes, as part of the German tradition, have made the German mind alert and receptive to progress in the utilization of resources. On the other hand, in Chinese civilization, one of the oldest in the world, a traditional emphasis has been placed on human rather than mechanical power, on agriculture as the major occupation and chief source of wealth. The traditional mind-set of the Chinese has been largely opposed to modern Western methods and has been unreceptive to modern science and technology.

What has just been said of the relation of the cultural background to the utilization of natural resources applies also to the utilization of natural routes and to the overcoming of obstacles offered by natural barriers. In spite of the revolution in transportation that has taken place during the last one hundred years, more than one-half of the world's people still transport a large part of their goods by primitive methods. The presence of great natural highways means little or nothing to many of these people. For example, to isolated self-sustaining communities of primitive people in parts of the East Indies, Africa, and South America, who still linger in the stage of "river transportation," the great natural ocean routes of the commercial world have no meaning. To such peoples, even comparatively small highlands may constitute effective barriers. On the other hand, people whose social heritage reflects an advanced stage of cultural development have tunneled through mountains, constructed roads and railways over natural barriers, and developed air transport even over the highest peaks.

With the completion of the present chapter the first milestone in the study of civilization has been passed. We have

paused to consider man himself and the character of the biological equipment that has made him the center of the manifold activities that enter into the complex achievement called culture. Human culture has been described and analyzed, and the dynamics of its growth and spread have been examined. The chief factors in the whole process of the development of civilization have been explored: (1) those forces that arise out of the biological heritage of man, (2) the influences or interactions that grow out of man's relations to his natural environment, (3) the conditioning influences that emerge from man's cultural heritage. Equipped with this body of information we pass on to a survey of the successive cultures, both prehistoric and historic, that have contributed to modern civilization in the Western world.

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## **PART II**

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION**





## PREHISTORIC CULTURES

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**H**OW FAR BACK can the cultural beginnings of Western civilization be traced? Certainly more than a hundred thousand years; some students think that the evidence points back a million years! Of this vast stretch of time the period of history occupies but a short space of some six thousand years. Prehistory affords no written records to guide the explorations of the student. For this reason, principally, the period has no "history." But even before the dawn of history the story of man's culture-building is not a closed book. Though prehistoric man has left no written records, he has left far more than his fossil remains to serve the anthropologist in his search for enlightenment. Numerous tools, utensils, and weapons, drawings and paintings on the walls of his caverns, remains of his dwellings, and other bits of evidence reveal to the trained student some knowledge of the nature of early cultures. It is upon that period that attention is now to be focused—the period of prehistoric man.

The story begins with the dawn of human culture, when man lived in the open or in rock shelters, used sticks and stones for weapons and tools, lived the life of the nomadic hunter, and stood on the bottom rung of the cultural ladder. It ends with the dawn of history, five or six thousand years ago, when stone as a material was giving way to copper and bronze, and agriculture and settled communities had long since emerged. Al-

ready the children of men were widely distributed, everywhere laying the foundations for the civilizations to come.

### The unsolved problem of culture origins

The student may wonder how we can reconstruct the cultural past of man, since in the beginning there were no documents, no sources such as those ordinarily accessible to the historians of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Admittedly, our knowledge of culture origins is extremely limited. We are reasonably certain that the basic elements of culture, such as economic organization, the family, and religion are of great antiquity. But when, where, and how they began is not known. As we shall see, there is more certainty as to the origin of tools, pottery, the domestication of plants and animals, and the techniques of engraving and painting—that is, elements of material culture. Even here, however, the evidence is frequently scant and insufficient. Hence caution should be the invariable rule for the student of culture origins. The scarcity of evidence may stimulate interesting and even valuable speculation; but speculation must not be mistaken for proof.

The reason for this uncertainty about the early cultures is clear. The tools, utensils, instruments, and material objects of various kinds are sometimes buried beneath thousand-year deposits of debris and earth, and distributed in areas widely separated. The labor necessary to obtain these material objects is immense. Once they are collected, the exacting procedure of placing them as to time and type is essential; otherwise they tell no story.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, there are great gaps in our information—periods and places about which data are entirely lacking. Prehistory is like a book from which many pages, especially the first ones, are missing, and many others so badly tattered and torn that they are difficult, even for the expert, to read.

In spite of such handicaps, however, remarkable progress has been made in the depiction of the earliest cultures. As will appear in the course of this discussion, the prehistory of

<sup>1</sup>For an interesting discussion of the methods of the student of prehistory, see M. C. Burkitt, *The Old Stone Age* (The Macmillan Company, 1933), Chap. 2.



Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the islands of the seas has been explored—in some instances thoroughly, in others incompletely or only incidentally. Numerous scholars during the past fifty years have toiled incessantly to uncover the past and literally to dig from dirt and debris with hand, tool, and machine the story of human culture. We now turn to the details and sequence of this story.

### Divisions of the prehistoric period

The whole span of human culture is sometimes divided into three ages, the Age of Stone, the Age of Bronze, and the Age of Iron.<sup>1</sup> Obviously, this classification, based as it is on the material preëminent in the manufacture of tools and implements of a given time, is a decided over-simplification of culture history. No culture, past or present, is adequately characterized in this manner. Actually no student makes any such claim. Stone, copper, bronze, and iron serve merely to identify and only incidentally to characterize the cultures of prehistoric and historic times.

Roughly the Stone Age represents the prehistoric cultures and covers an interval of time variously estimated at from one hundred thousand to one million years. The Stone Age embraces three major divisions: the Eolithic, or "Dawn" Age; the Paleolithic Age, or Old Stone Age; and the Neolithic, or New Stone Age. (See Chart V, p. 128.)

Before considering the characteristics of these early cultures, the student should observe certain cautions. First, the chronology of prehistory lacks exactness. We cannot date with accuracy the beginning of the Paleolithic, or even the Neolithic, culture, though as we approach historic times certainty is greater.<sup>2</sup> Gaps in our information, as previously suggested, in part account for this chaos in chronology. But other facts

<sup>1</sup>The term "Age of Steel" is sometimes applied to present-day civilization.

<sup>2</sup>The unsatisfactory state of prehistoric chronology is indicated, for example, by the disagreement among students as to the time of origin of the Paleolithic Age. Osborn dates it 600,000 years ago; Childe 300,000 years back; Wallis suggests 150,000 years; while Lowie and Kroeber suggest 100,000 years ago as the possible time of its beginning. This gives meaning to De Morgan's wise remark that "We must not seek to give to prehistory a precision which it lacks." (*Prehistoric Man*, p. 5.)

CHART V. PREHISTORY OF EUROPE

CHRONOLOGY ( <i>Estimates</i> )	CULTURE EPOCHS	RACIAL TYPES	GEOLOGICAL AND CLIMATIC CON- DITIONS
1,000 B. C.	Iron	Modern Racial Types	Temperate
3,000 B. C.	Copper and Bronze		
10,000 B. C.	Late Neolithic		
	Early Neolithic		
12,000 B. C.	Epi-Paleolithic		
25,000 B. C.	Upper Paleolithic	Cro-Magnon Brünn Grimaldi	Post-glacial (Cold, then warmer, and near the end of the period, cold again)
50,000 B. C.	Middle Paleolithic	Neanderthal Man	4th Glacial (Very cold)
300,000 B. C.	Lower Paleolithic	Racial Types Not Known	3rd Interglacial (More temperate)
			3rd Glacial (Cold)
500,000— 1,000,000 B. C.	Eolithic	Heidelberg Man	2nd Interglacial (Temperate)
		Pitldown Man	2nd Glacial (Cold)
		Pithecanthro- pus Erectus	1st Interglacial
		Peking Man	1st Glacial

contribute. Thus actually there are no absolute divisions in prehistory. There is no sharp line between the Paleolithic and the Neolithic or between the various periods of these cultures. Moreover, the various cultures of prehistory, viewed geographically, developed unevenly, not uniformly.<sup>1</sup> For ex-

<sup>1</sup>In this connection the reader is reminded that even within a given region, certainly as early as the Paleolithic, there were diverse cultures, representing

ample, the Neolithic cultures of western Asia and the Mediterranean area were several thousand years ahead of those of central and northwestern Europe, while in the Americas man and culture did not make their appearance until possibly 15,000 years ago. Early in the development of culture regional differences appeared; and hence no time table of prehistory is really applicable to all cultures of any period. No two cultures, past or present, have ever developed in exactly the same way.

Before describing the prehistoric cultures in detail we must consider the problem of the much-debated Eolithic culture, believed by many to be a precursor of Paleolithic culture. The controversy does not so much center about the existence of the Dawn Age culture, since most students are inclined to concede that the Paleolithic was probably preceded by an even more elementary form of culture. Rather the issue centers around the nature of the eoliths—crude flints, apparently used for scraping, cutting, and boring. The eolithophiles, as one writer calls them, believe that many of these eoliths were manufactured, while their critics incline to think that they were produced by friction and erosion, or by the action of water and weather. The skeptics point out that many of the eoliths found predate the fossil men, the alleged creators of the Eolithic cultures. In any event our knowledge of these Pre-Paleolithic cultures remains vague and shadowy.<sup>1</sup>

### PALEOLITHIC CULTURES

Unlike the Eolithic period, the Paleolithic affords indisputable evidence of the existence of culture. The Paleolithic age

varying stages of development. Menghin, for example, claims that in western Europe in the Early Paleolithic there were two basic cultures, termed the flake and the hand ax cultures. See Oswald Menghin, "Origin and Development of the Early Paleolithic Cultures" in *Early Man* (Edited by George G. MacCurdy, J. B. Lippincott, 1937), pp. 303-314.

<sup>1</sup>There are, nevertheless, a number of students of the subject who tend to accept the eolith as evidence of an Eolithic culture, among them: M. C. Burkitt (*The Old Stone Age*, pp. 99-107); Henry F. Osborn (*Men of the Old Stone Age*, pp. 84-86); George MacCurdy (*Human Origins*, Vol. I, pp. 86-102); W. J. Sollas, (*Ancient Hunters*, pp. 67-105); H. F. Cleland (*Our Prehistoric Ancestors*, pp. 5-10).



may be divided into three periods—the Lower, Middle, and Upper Paleolithic—each characterized by more or less distinctive features.<sup>1</sup> For the chronology of the Paleolithic cultures the reader is referred to Chart V, with the caution that no statement on Paleolithic time is more than a shrewd estimate. We are reasonably certain that the period lasted not more than 300,000 years and not less than 100,000 years; and that possibly it came to an end in some areas as early as 20,000 years ago, and in other regions as late as 7,000 years ago. Certainly, excepting the doubtful Eolithic, it represents the longest phase in culture history.

### Characteristics of Lower Paleolithic

The Lower Paleolithic lasted until possibly 50,000 years ago. Unfortunately we know nothing of the physical or racial type of this early phase of Paleolithic life. However, something is known of the tools, condition of life, and geographic distribution of Lower Paleolithic culture. The most distinctive tool or instrument of this period was the hand ax, a large, almond-shaped piece of flint, in appearance somewhat like two hands with the palms touching. These tools were used for many purposes, such as striking, chipping, scraping, skinning, and boring. They apparently varied in length from two to twelve inches. They were made by striking off large flakes of flint until the core emerged, shaped as described. Later in the period, advances were made in the manufacture of the *coup de poing*, as the hand ax has been called. The chipping was finer. It was often carefully retouched, the heavier tool of earlier times becoming thinner and lighter.

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<sup>1</sup>Technically this threefold division of Paleolithic culture is inaccurate. Students of prehistory distinguish at least three subdivisions of the Lower Paleolithic—the Pre-Chellean, the Chellean, and the Acheulean; and three subdivisions for the Upper Paleolithic—the Aurignacian, the Solutrean, and the Magdalenian. What is here called the Middle Paleolithic is sometimes discussed as a subperiod of the Lower Paleolithic and referred to as the Mousterian. Following such students as MacCurdy, Burkitt, and Cleland, the author has chosen to consider the Middle Paleolithic as representing a distinct period in culture development. The basis for this choice will appear in the discussion of the Middle Paleolithic. The decision to eliminate the more detailed classification of the cultures of prehistory is based upon the desire to simplify the presentation. It is hoped that the essentials of prehistory are not thereby violated.

The stone hand ax was probably as distinctive of Lower Paleolithic culture as is the iron and steel machinery of our day, while flint was as indispensable for the man of this age as iron ore is for us. The Lower Paleolithic had its expert workmen, as the discovery of many sites where tools were made indicates. Tools and implements were probably also made from wood; if so, they have long crumbled into dust.

Clothing and ornaments were in evidence during this period. Ornamentation is possibly older than clothing. Renard claims that ornaments were made from seed, teeth, and shell during the Lower Paleolithic. Clothing made from the skins of animals was probably worn. The weather during the Lower Paleolithic in western Europe ranged from temperate to very cold. Under such climatic circumstances clothes were essential, especially since the men of the period apparently lived in the open. Pins and needles had not yet been invented; hence the skin suits must have been one-piece affairs. Possibly the use of fire was known, though the proof is not definite.

The man of the Lower Paleolithic was a nomadic hunter. In western Europe he probably hunted the ox, bison, boar, deer, and horse. From the animals he got much of his food, while their skins provided cover and clothing. These roving hunters, with their scant equipment of culture, were widely distributed in Europe, Asia, and Africa, though undoubtedly Lower Paleolithic population was sparsely and unevenly distributed over the vast areas it nominally inhabited. Areas of great cold or regions without a food supply were probably avoided. Since flint was so important as a material for tools and weapons, the distribution of flint-bearing areas possibly was another factor in the distribution of these unknown men of remote prehistoric times.

### **The Middle Paleolithic culture**

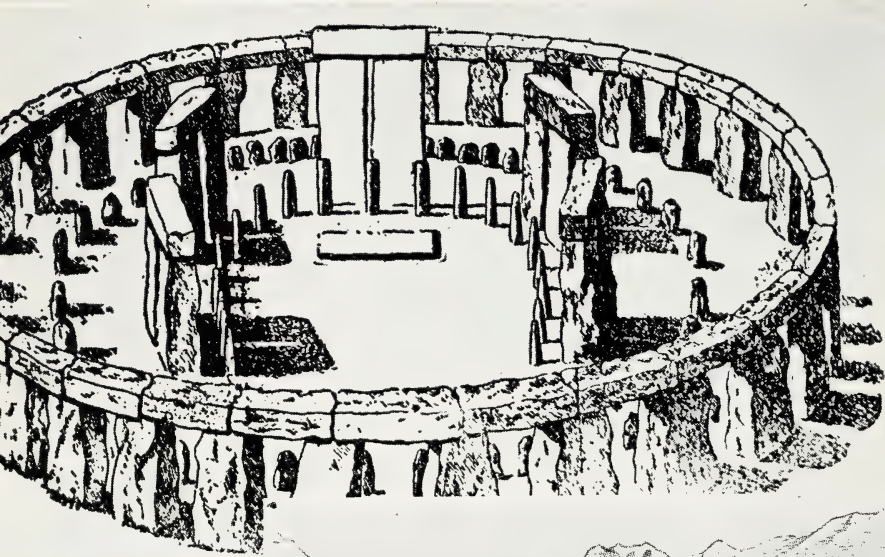
During the Middle Paleolithic, beginning possibly 50,000 years ago and covering a period of 25,000 years, notable advances were registered in the culture heritage. First, a new method of tool manufacture was invented. This new process

involved chipping and flaking through pressure of a sharp stone implement on the material being worked. By this method large and small pieces of flint were obtained and a greater variety of tools became possible. Old types of tools were improved and new types appeared. An inventory of the tools and instruments found in the rock shelter "workshops" of the period would include scrapers (probably used to scrape and prepare hides), awls, drills, flint knives, notched flints (used for saws), bolas, spheroid stones (perhaps used to kill game), and also spears and daggers. The man of this period was more economical in his use of flint. The flaking and pressure technique made for both variety and beauty of tools. Possibly the longer winter days in the rock shelter encouraged experimentation with the small nodules of flint split from the large pieces. Bone also was probably used as a material for tool manufacture. Cleland thinks that the artisan used heavy bone as a kind of anvil in his workshop.

The man of the Middle Paleolithic—*Neanderthal*, as he has been named—may be credited with other distinct contributions. As it became colder, owing to the advance of the last great ice sheet, he had to desert the open camping places and take up residence in rock shelters and the mouths of caverns. Possibly he hung up skins to protect himself from the cold. Apparently his clothes were still made from the pelt of animals, and, since the art of the tailor was still unknown, the one-piece suit remained the vogue. The use of fire and cooking may have been known in the Early Paleolithic, but it is certain that the man of the Middle Paleolithic knew both the use of fire and the art of cooking, as the many finds in his habitations of burned debris and charred animal bones suggest. Possibly here is the beginning of the much-romanticized hearth. Man was still a nomadic hunter, dependent partly for his food supply upon his animal contemporaries, such as the horse, wild sheep, and cave bear. Cracked bear skulls found in many of the cavern homes of the period testify to both the hunger and the prowess of Middle Paleolithic man. Cleland suggests that as the bear came from the deep recesses of the cavern, the hunter, waiting at the mouth of the cave,







Top left: cave art; top right: rock shelter art. Both are of the Paleolithic Period, discovered in Spain. (From M. C. Burkitt: *The Old Stone Age*. Courtesy of The Macmillan Company.) Center: Megaliths (reconstructed), Stonehenge, England. An example of monuments of the Neolithic Period. (From C. J. Warden: *The Evolution of Human Behavior*. Courtesy of The Macmillan Company.) Lower picture: A Swiss lake dwelling (reconstructed) of the Neolithic Period. (From J. M. Tyler: *The New Stone Age in Northern Europe*. Courtesy of Charles Scribner's Sons.)



cracked the bear's skull with a long-handled club to which stones were attached.

We know nothing of the social and institutional life of Middle Paleolithic man, other than that he was a hunter and lived for fairly long periods in rock shelters and cave homes. The fact that he sometimes buried his dead and left tools and utensils with the bodies leads us to suspect the existence of some sort of religion. The use of fire, a knowledge of cooking, and the technological ingenuity of the man of this period indicate an increasing power to adjust himself to physical environment and even to utilize it for his own ends.

### **The Upper Paleolithic culture**

While the Upper Paleolithic covered a relatively short period in the annals of prehistory, possibly not more than 15,000 years, the contributions of this phase of the Paleolithic age are impressive. First, there were significant advances in technology. In the earlier phase of the period the striking, flaking, and retouching techniques of the Middle Paleolithic were continued, but extended to an even wider variety of tools and instruments. Scrapers, blades, awls, gouges, and drills were produced in profusion. Later in the period beautiful long stone blades, thin and sharp and delicately retouched, were manufactured. Secondary shaping tools, as MacCurdy has termed them, were made from flint flakes. This invention made possible the extensive manufacture for the first time of tools and instruments from bone, horn, and ivory. The results were the highly important bone needle, the javelin thrower and point, the dart thrower, and the harpoon.

Upper Paleolithic man added to his comfort and security in various ways. His chief habitation was probably still the rock shelter and cavern entrance of the Middle Paleolithic. But he was better clad than the man of that period. The invention of the bone needle laid the basis for the tailor's art. The one-piece suit could now be supplemented by a sewn garment and a better-fitting one. Moreover, for the first time, in so far as we know, man learned how to "strike a light" and artificially to produce fire. Previously he had had to keep his



fire going. Now he could create it at will. This knowledge contributed both to comfort and to the art of cooking. Furthermore, the improved technology previously cited, especially the sharper tools, the javelin, the dart, and the harpoon, made an adequate food supply more certain. The bear, the ox, the horse, and the reindeer were important food animals during the Upper Paleolithic. So important was the reindeer in the latter days of the period that the men of that time have often been referred to as the Reindeer Men. With his improved tools and weapons the man of the Upper Paleolithic was probably a more successful hunter and hence a better-fed man than his predecessors.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the Upper Paleolithic culture was its art. So far as the records show, the men of this period were the first engravers, sculptors, and painters. In addition, they produced ornaments such as bracelets and necklaces from bone, teeth, and shell. In deference to the remarkable accomplishment of these artists Osborn has aptly termed them "Paleolithic Greeks."<sup>1</sup> Engraved and painted on the walls of the caverns are the figures of animals of the period, the wild horse, the ox, the wild boar, the reindeer, and others. One authority claims that no less than thirty kinds of animals have been depicted in the cavern art of the Upper Paleolithic. Small figures were also carved from bone, horn, ivory, and stone, representing many types of animal life. Even the human figure is represented in the sculpture and painting of the Paleolithic artist.

How may we account for the prolific and effective artistry of this period? On the technical side it was made possible by the invention of the fine cutting tools previously referred to,

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<sup>1</sup>Hooten does not share this enthusiasm for the Paleolithic art. He says: "There are indeed some admirable engravings and drawings of animals which were the work of these cave dwellers, but the majority of them are mediocre or even bad. And some of the finest seem to me to have been considerably improved in the drawings and reproductions of them which have been made by modern artists. The statuettes of women and the drawing of human beings which survive from the cave period are grotesque, crude, and almost entirely lacking in artistic merit. The enthusiasm of the students of prehistory has outstripped their sense of values in the estimate placed upon them as attempts at art." E. A. Hooten, *Up from the Ape* (The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 371.

and by the discovery of pigments of various kinds and the art of mixing them. But technology as such does not produce art. What, then, was the basis of Upper Paleolithic art? Possibly much of the work expressed an æsthetic reaction, such, for example, as ornamental pendants. But according to most students the carvings, engravings, and paintings of animals represented an effort to bring the animals themselves under control. An engraving of the horse or reindeer was considered an aid to the hunter. Cleland suggests that when the hunters were preparing for the chase the artists made pictures of the animals the hunters hoped to kill. Art was thus allied to magic. The artist's drawings and engravings were believed to charm the animals and thus to put them at the mercy of the hunters. Art was for the stomach's sake.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear from this brief summary of the Upper Paleolithic that the cultural heritage had been vastly enriched since the beginning. Kroeber has said that at the end of the Paleolithic, man's cultural accomplishments were three times as numerous as they were at the end of the Middle Paleolithic, and twenty times greater than they were at the beginning of the Paleolithic.<sup>2</sup>

### THE NEOLITHIC CULTURES

The Paleolithic cultures gave way gradually to the Neolithic. The transition did not occur everywhere at the same time nor were the transitional cultures uniform in type.<sup>3</sup> The span of these cultures possibly ranged from two or three thousand years in northern and western Europe to five or six thousand years in Egypt and southwestern Asia. While the art of the Upper Paleolithic disappeared, probably no radical

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<sup>1</sup>The relation of art to magic is further suggested by the representation of the female figure in which the organs associated with reproduction are enlarged, apparently in an effort by the artist to encourage fertility.

<sup>2</sup>A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (Harcourt, Brace, 1923), pp. 176-177.

<sup>3</sup>Wallis estimates that the Paleolithic ended about 18,000 B. C. in Egypt and southwestern Asia; 14,000 B. C. in southeastern Europe; and 10,000 B. C. in northwestern Europe. The transition period between the Paleolithic and Neolithic is variously referred to as Mesolithic, Proto-Neolithic, and Epi-Paleolithic. Typical cultures were the Azilian and Tardenoisian of France, the Caspian in Spain, and the Maglemose of northern Europe.

change occurred in the pattern of life. The increasing movement of people from Asia, Africa, and Europe, together with, perhaps, the warmer weather, contributed to the development of the rich cultures of the Neolithic, the outlines of which emerged in Europe possibly ten or twelve thousand years ago, and in Egypt and the lands bordering on the Mediterranean still earlier.

The Neolithic period is usually divided into the Early and Late Neolithic. In some respects the Early Neolithic was similar to the Late Paleolithic and transitional cultures. For example, men continued to depend very largely upon hunting for food; the cave and rock shelter were the important habitations, though the constructed hut was used; and tools were still made of stone and bone, the stone as yet being unpolished. However, at least five additional items were added by the men of the Early Neolithic to the accumulated culture heritage. These were a more abundant use of bone and horn, now polished; the bow and arrow; the invention and use of pottery; the invention of the hewn ax; and the domestication of the dog. The rubbing and polishing technique in the manufacture of such tools and instruments as bone chisels, awls, fishhooks, and needles was a distinct contribution to prehistoric technology. The bow and arrow lessened the dangers of hunting, increased the "kill," and added to the armaments of man as a fighter. The invention of pottery was supremely important. Vessels were now available for storage and cooking. Boiled foods, soups, stews, and porridge made from grains, roots, and vegetables thus enriched the menu. The danger from starvation and famine was lessened. Moreover, pottery-making gave impetus to craftsmanship and artistry, as many of the beautiful vessels of the Late Neolithic especially show. The hewn ax, not yet polished, was valuable both as a tool and as a weapon. The domestication of the dog, possibly a half-tame camp-follower of the nomadic hunters of the Upper Paleolithic, marked man's first step in the subjugation of the animal world for his use. While these accomplishments of Early Neolithic man may appear trifling to us moderns, they actually represent significant advances in human culture.



**Late Neolithic culture**

The additions to the cultural heritage made by the men of the Late Neolithic are impressive. The list includes the art of polishing stone, the development of flint mining as a major industry, the invention of spinning and weaving, the continued improvement in pottery-making, the increase in objects of vanity and ornamentation, possibly the invention of the dug-out boat, and—most important of all—the use of agriculture associated with the domestication of plants and animals.

While unpolished stone tools and implements continued to be extensively used during the Late Neolithic, the application of grinding and polishing techniques in tool manufacture revolutionized technology. It improved the efficiency of the ax, knife, dagger, and other implements. Coupled with the use of fire it contributed to the invention of the dugout boat of this period. Without the sharp, polished stone knife, trepanning—a surgical operation known to Late Neolithic man, involving the removal of pieces of the skull—would have been impossible. The extensive use of flint by the greatly increased population of this period made flint-mining a major industry. Having found a site where good flint was to be had, the expert miner sank a shaft, sometimes to a depth of thirty feet. When the layers of superior flint were reached, tunnels or galleries were driven along the bed of the mine, radiating from the shafts in the manner of spokes from the hub of a wheel. The equipment of the Neolithic miner was simple, comprising a deerhorn pick, the shoulder blade of an ox for a shovel, and a lamp made from a cup hollowed from chalk or stone, perhaps with a wick fed by melted tallow.

Late Neolithic man invented both the spindle and the loom. Spinning and weaving were practiced, and undoubtedly clothing was thereby improved. Probably, however, the rude skin garment did not disappear. Apparently a lavish use was made of such ornaments as necklaces, bracelets, and breastpins made from shell, bone, stone of various kinds, and the teeth of such animals as the dog, wolf, fox, bear, wild boar, and deer. Amber was used in northern Europe. The painting

and tattooing of the body was probably practiced. Pottery was often beautifully decorated. Though we may charge Neolithic man with vanity, we must also recognize him as a craftsman and an artist.

### **The beginning of agriculture**

Of all Neolithic man's accomplishments, agriculture was undoubtedly the greatest. Its center of origin is in doubt. Egypt, western Asia, and central Asia have been suggested. Agriculture in Europe was probably derived from Crete, spreading from there to the Danubian regions of central Europe and later to other parts of Europe.

At the heart of the agricultural complex of the Late Neolithic was the domestication of plants and animals. In Europe at least five food plants were used—barley, wheat, millet, peas, and lentils. In the New World two other plants were added to the domesticated list—maize and tobacco. In addition to these, the fruits of many wild plants—such as acorns, apples, grapes, hazelnuts, and beechnuts—were harvested for food. One writer has drawn up a list of 120 fruits probably used by the hunter-agriculturalist of the Late Neolithic. In addition to these food products, flax, important for clothing, was cultivated. The cultivation of plants resulted in the introduction of new kinds of tools, such as the digging stick and a rude wooden plow used to loosen the soil, and a sickle for harvesting grain made by attaching a curved notched flint to a handle of wood. For grinding grain a mill was used, consisting of a hard flat rock on which the grain was crushed by means of a long grinding stone flattened on one side.

Associated with the more settled existence of the Late Neolithic was the extensive domestication of animals. The domestication of the dog in the Early Neolithic has been mentioned. Goats, swine, sheep, cattle, and camels were domesticated by Late Neolithic man; and some writers even credit him with domesticating the horse. Possibly the domestication of animals originated in Asia, knowledge of their use spreading slowly to other parts of the world. The domestication of plants and animals did not eliminate hunting as a

source of food supply. Probably not all the men of the Late Neolithic practiced agriculture; and it was much later that hunting became a sport rather than a necessity.

It is difficult to overestimate the gain made when man began to till the soil and to domesticate animals. These additions to human culture radically altered the life of man. Populations increased in density, fixed dwellings were made possible, settled villages emerged, and the foundations were laid for a more stabilized social life.<sup>1</sup> Various types of dwellings were constructed: huts made of interlaced branches, daubed with mud and clay; pit dwellings covered by a roof; and the so-called lake dwellings built on piles out in the water, probably as protection against foes. Despite these improvements it is quite possible that caverns were still used as a place to live. The more settled existence contributed to the construction of great burial chambers of the period, known to us as "dolmens." They were put together out of huge slabs of stone. The concern for the dead is indicated by the presence of upright pillars of stone—erected both singly and in alignment—which were probably used in connection with worship. These Neolithic people, varieties of our own species, *Homo sapiens*, definitely laid the basis for the great cultures of antiquity.

## THE STONE AGE WORLD

The growth and sequence of prehistoric cultures has been our chief concern thus far in this chapter. We turn now to other features of the Stone Age world: the distribution of its cultures, the racial types that created them, the progress of Stone Age man in his environmental adjustments, and—most important for present purposes—the character and value of his contributions to civilization as a whole.

### Cultural distribution and racial types

By the end of the Lower Paleolithic, culture was widely distributed. Representative types of this culture are known to

<sup>1</sup>Cole has described the significance of agriculture as follows: "With domestic plants and animals, man became attached to a locality. He had something to defend, and, in order to preserve his holdings, he doubtless was willing to sub-



have existed in England, in western, central, and southern Europe, in northern Africa, in China, in India, and in western Asia. Unfortunately, we know nothing of the men who created and utilized these cultures. The first racial type of which we have detailed knowledge is the Neanderthal Man of the Middle Paleolithic, described by Kroeber as "a short thick-set race, powerful in bones and musculature, slightly stooping at the knee and at the shoulder, with a thick neck and large head." In the words of Romer, "He was a man in a broad sense, but a man with the mark of the ape still upon him."

By the end of the Paleolithic, a variety of racial types had emerged and culture was approaching a universal distribution. In Europe evidence of Upper Paleolithic culture is to be found in the areas today known as Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, England, and the Northern Countries; likewise in northern Africa, China, India, Siberia, Palestine, and Syria. Possibly, too, the Americas were settled near the end of the Paleolithic by people from northeastern Asia, who crossed over at the Bering Strait and ultimately spread through the two continents. Thus by the end of the Paleolithic, some ten or fifteen thousand years ago, the process of peopling the earth was well under way. In Europe we know of at least three racial types extant during this period, all belonging to the species of modern man, *Homo sapiens*. The Cro-Magnon type is described as straight of limb, tall, with a long, narrow, and high head. According to Cole, Cro-Magnon man probably came from somewhere in Asia, perhaps invading Europe along the southern shores of the Mediterranean, crossing the land bridges then existing at Italy and Gibraltar; and from there moving into western Europe. In central Europe there lived the Brunn race; and to the south, remains of the Grimaldi man have been found, a type regarded by some authorities as Negroid in character. Less is known about types of men inhabiting Africa and Asia. In south and east Africa types have been

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ordinate himself to authority, and so, apparently, village life developed." Fay-Cooper Cole in *The Nature of the World and of Man* (University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 363.

found which were probably associated with Paleolithic cultures. Many students believe that Asia was a prolific breeding ground for prehuman and human types; but as yet little is known of the early racial history of that continent.<sup>1</sup>

During the transition period between the Paleolithic and the Neolithic, Cro-Magnon man seems to have disappeared. Probably during this time the ancestors of the modern races were pushing into Europe. By the end of the Neolithic, owing to increased migration of peoples, multiplication of contacts, increasing admixtures of diverse types, and the play of other factors, great variation in racial types obtained. The racial history of mankind was becoming more complex, a prelude to the racial confusion of today.

Many of the elements of Neolithic culture, so far as we can judge, were of Oriental origin. The Near East especially was important as a focal area in the development of the Late Neolithic cultures. Broadly speaking, the path of diffusion led from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, westward across the Aegean, by way of Cyprus to Greece; from there extending northwestward into central, western, and, later, northern Europe. The Neolithic cultures of Europe were thus immigrant cultures, modified and adapted to the conditions and needs of the areas in which they took root.

By the end of the period, elements and types of Neolithic culture were to be found in practically every part of the world. For example, the Lake-Dwellers, a Neolithic people, were settled in Switzerland, southern Germany, northern Italy, parts of France, and in Austria. Neolithic tombs and caverns of the dead have been discovered in Spain, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Holland, Germany, and the islands of the western Mediterranean; also in northern Africa, India, Java, and Madagascar. By the end of the period the Americas were settled, though sparsely. Africa was being peopled. Stone

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<sup>1</sup>Sinanthropus was probably a pre-Paleolithic type, though at least one writer, Pei Wen-Chung, thinks that Sinanthropus was associated with Lower Paleolithic culture. See his "Paleolithic Industries in China" in *Early Man* (Edited by G. G. MacCurdy, J. B. Lippincott, 1937), pp. 224-225. For detailed discussion of prehistoric men see Keith, *New Discoveries Relating to the Antiquity of Man* (W. W. Norton Co., 1933), and Chapter 3 of the present volume.

Age people settled in New Zealand, Australia, and many of the islands of the Pacific. Thus with the conclusion of the Neolithic period the restless and varied types of humanity were elaborating the cultural heritage of prehistory and were laying the basis for the later cultures of historic times. (See Chart IV, p. 53. For summary of this period, see Appendix, p. 1033.)

### Contributions of the Stone Age to civilization

From the vantage point of modern culture, Stone Age culture may appear crude and inconsequential. Actually, however, considering the obstacles overcome and the definite achievements of Stone Age man, his contributions to civilization were important.

#### The end of the Paleolithic

sees man in possession of a number of mechanical arts which enable him to produce a considerable variety of tools in several materials; sees him controlling fire; cooking food; wearing clothes, and living in definite habitations; probably possessing some sort of social grouping, order, and ideas of law and justice; clearly under the influence of some kind of religion; highly advanced in the plastic arts; and presumably already narrating legends and singing songs. In short, many fundamental elements of civilization were established.<sup>1</sup>

While Paleolithic man in his long history did lay the basis for future culture development, he neither controlled his physical environment nor effectively utilized its resources. He was pretty much at the mercy of the climate, though his invention of fire and clothing and his retreat to the rock shelter added to his comfort. For his food supply he was largely dependent upon wild animals and plants, though as time passed his effectiveness as a hunter undoubtedly increased. He did partially utilize the resources of his environment, but his effectiveness was woefully limited by his lack of skills, knowledge, and a more advanced technology.

During the Neolithic period, man made more effective adjustments to his environment and utilized its resources more expertly than did his predecessors of the Paleolithic. The

<sup>1</sup>A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology*, pp. 178-179.



evidence for this conclusion is to be found in a vastly improved technology, the domestication of plants and animals, the construction of homes, the invention of pottery, spinning, and weaving, and in other accomplishments of the Neolithic. Cleland has aptly summarized the contribution made to human security and cultural enrichment during the Neolithic:

The Neolithic is the greatest of all chapters in human history because the inventions and discoveries of that time are the broad foundations upon which the whole structure of modern civilization is built. Neolithic man invented agriculture. He domesticated animals. By these means he made himself more independent of the caprices of nature and was better able to cope with famine. He invented pottery and the baking oven and could cook his food nearly or quite as well as it is cooked today. He learned the art of spinning and weaving, and, although cloth commonly was coarse, it was probably as warm as that made now. He learned to dye his cloth and thus satisfy his aesthetic taste. He learned to construct well-made, comfortable houses, and to lay out villages. As a result of living in organized communities, he invented the fundamentals of government. The only means of transportation, as far as known, was by foot and boat. But this was sufficient to enable him to spread over nearly the whole world; over Asia, Africa, Europe, the Americas, the islands of the sea. Then progress was slow; now it is rapid. It is merely a matter of degree.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>H. F. Cleland, *Our Prehistoric Ancestors* (Coward-McCann, Inc., 1928), pp. 130-131.

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## ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS OF THE NEAR EAST

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IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER we attempted to penetrate the mists enveloping the life of the Stone Age; to trace man's fitful cultural progress from the earliest beginnings to the end of the Neolithic, the last and the richest of the Stone Age cultures. We now pass on to the historical period of Western civilization. Why is the Stone Age assigned to prehistory, and the Near East, after 5000 B. C., to history? A momentous event, the development of the art of writing, is the essential reason. As Renard has put it: "On the day that a people learns how to preserve in written documents the memory of what it has accomplished, it passes out of prehistory."<sup>1</sup> Stone Age man had no writing. But the emergence from prehistory signifies much more than the addition of writing. By the end of the Stone Age many of the fundamentals of human culture had been introduced, such as toolmaking, pottery, agriculture, and art; yet, as we shall see presently, much was lacking from the vantage point of the historic civilizations soon to be described.

The period of the historic cultures is impressively short compared to the long span of prehistory. History covers only about five or six thousand years of the unnumbered millenniums of culture development. The time span of prehistory is many

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<sup>1</sup>G. Renard, *Life and Work in Prehistoric Times* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1929), p. 22.



times that of history. The comparison may come as a revelation to those who habitually think of the so-called "ancient" periods of history as remote from our own age. In point of time the period of man's life known to us through written records is truly limited; ancient history appears to draw surprisingly close to us. Yet during the short interval of history, human culture has been enriched infinitely more than it was during the ten hundred thousand years preceding. This fact is no reflection on the man of prehistory. He laid the basis for culture-building, and it is only natural, in the light of the cumulative nature of culture, that the cultural heritage should be enriched with increasing rapidity as time passed.

### FACTORS IN THE TRANSITION FROM PREHISTORY TO HISTORY

Just when does prehistory end and history begin? Answers to this question can only be approximations. Prehistory shades into history. There is a twilight period, a transitional epoch, when the line of demarcation between prehistory and history is blurred. Furthermore, the ending of the one and the beginning of the other vary regionally. Thus prehistory ends about 5000 B. C. in Egypt and western Asia; 3000 B. C. in southern and eastern Europe; and from five hundred to a thousand years later in western and northern Europe. These variations indicate simply that the cultural advance of man has not been uniform from one region to another.

The foregoing suggests that there was nothing sudden about the change from the comparatively simple cultures of the Neolithic to the advanced civilizations of the Near East. The striking contrasts between the two will become more comprehensible to us if we precede our study of the Near East by a consideration of the significance of some of the additions made to culture during the twilight period referred to above and during the early historical period itself. Prehistoric man has justly been given credit for his achievements. It is not to be forgotten that the civilizations of the historic ages are definitely related to the cultures of the prehistoric period, and

were rich precisely because of the heritage transmitted from prehistory, which gave them foundations on which to build. Nevertheless, Stone Age man lacked much equipment of immense importance in the building of civilization. As already indicated, the men of the Stone Age had no writing; besides, they had invented no accurate means of measuring time, no system of weights and measures; they had not learned how to use metals, had no effective means of transportation and no elaborate trade and commerce; and they had built no great cities or complex social, political, and religious systems. All these are distinguishing characteristics of the historic civilizations. (See Summaries I and II, Appendix, pp. 1033-1035.)

### **The invention of writing**

In the development of writing, three stages may be distinguished: (1) the pictographic form—picture writing—which employs pictures of things and symbols of ideas; (2) the hieroglyphic form, whereby the representation of sounds begins, still through the abbreviation of pictures; (3) alphabet writing, commonly spoken of as the phonetic system of writing, which has come down to us from ancient times.

Pictographic writing is so old in the story of the human race that it is impossible to say when it first began, for the impulse to draw appears exceedingly early in the life of man. No one people invented it; it probably arose among many groups, and it is still employed by numerous primitive peoples in all parts of the world. It consists essentially of pictures or drawings of things and of acts. It is not a form of real writing. Its limitations as a means of communication are obvious. It is cumbersome, difficult, and inadequate.

The development of hieroglyphic and of phonetic or alphabetic writing belongs to the historic period of the Near East presently to be examined. Both in Egypt and in the lower part of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley the higher forms of hieroglyphic writing appeared between 5000 and 4000 B. C. Alphabetic writing came much later, emerging perhaps about 1000 B. C., probably in western Asia. The development of these forms and their diffusion will be presented later. Just

now we are particularly interested in the significance of the invention of writing in the development of culture.

As stated at the opening of this chapter, writing is the most significant addition to man's equipment in marking the line between history and prehistory. With writing began the accumulation of documents and records to guide the historian in the reconstruction of the civilizations of the past. Writing stimulated learning, and enlarged the world of human knowledge. It aided in breaking down isolation and in multiplying contacts, and so emancipated man from the narrow world of his immediate experiences. Thus the cultural heritage that came to be embodied in written records was gradually disseminated among all peoples that had advanced to a point of interpreting them. In the field of economic life, as we have just observed, writing made possible the keeping of accurate records which facilitated transactions and led to the enlargement of trade and commerce. Its immediate effect upon early history was undoubtedly to contribute heavily to the long cultural dominance of Egypt and other Near Eastern lands; for these regions enjoyed a fairly adequate system of writing at a time when Europe and eastern and central Asia were yet deprived of this leverage of progress.

It is not to be implied, however, that the invention of writing transformed the whole group that possessed the technique. The masses remained illiterate, for the art of writing was in the keeping of a few, usually a privileged minority, who tended to make a cult and a mystery of it. It was a treasure to be kept from common men.

### **The invention of measuring devices**

The transitional period marks a culminating point in the development of several measuring devices, most important of which was the calendar. Long before the invention of the calendar, man had rude methods of calculating time. He observed the recurrence of the seasons and fixed them in time by reference to natural events rather than by astronomical calculations. The credit for inventing the earliest calendar probably belongs to the Egyptians. Its invention introduced



order into the story of man's experiences. It made dating, timing, and sequence possible in human transactions—business, political, and cultural. It supplemented memory and oral tradition. Clearly, it was one of the few great inventions that laid the foundation for historic civilizations.

Other measuring devices were in process of development during the period under discussion, devices for measuring distances and angles and for determining weights; but most of these as cultural achievements belong to the early historical period. It is probable, however, that simple systems of counting, weighing, and measuring were known before the dawn of history. Weights of stone and bronze were sometimes used. All such devices naturally came increasingly into demand as trade developed. With the rising importance of trade and specialized industry in the urban centers of Near Eastern civilizations more accurate measuring devices became increasingly useful and valuable in the facilitating of business enterprise.

### **The use of metals**

When man discovered the art of using metals he took another tremendous stride forward in the building of civilization. The first metal to be used for practical purposes was copper. How it was discovered as a useful metal is not known, but it is likely that the ease with which it could be worked attracted the attention of the toolmaker. As far as we know it was first used in Egypt about 5000 B. C. But copper was never adequate for the manufacture of tools. It was too soft. Bronze was the answer to the need for a harder metal. Bronze is an alloy of tin and copper, harder than copper, easy to melt and cast. It was probably in use in the Near East by the close of the third millennium B. C. A list of the more important articles made of bronze includes axes, chisels, knives, gouges, lances, sickles, molds for casting various articles, hammers, saws, swords, arrowheads, helmets, breast-plates, shields, trumpets, buckles, bands (for the arms), bracelets, anklets, necklaces, safety pins, and pots of many sorts.

This enumeration of itself indicates the distinct cultural advance over the stone technology of the Neolithic period

made by the introduction of bronze—of metals generally. Efficient though the Neolithic craftsmen and technicians were, they were nevertheless limited by their materials. With the introduction of metals, many tools, implements, and utensils, impossible during the Age of Stone, were added to the capital wealth of society. Tools and implements to do more things and to do them more expertly resulted in a more extended conquest of the physical environment, a higher standard of existence, and the release of time for activities other than those devoted to the elemental, physical needs of man. The use of bronze placed better weapons in the hands of the soldier, made him a more efficient killer, and at the same time supplied him with a more effective armor of protection. The use of bronze represents the beginning of a steadily increasing utilization of a growing variety of metals by man, a march leading straight to our own time, which is, by long odds, the greatest age of metals in history.

It should be remembered, however, that in no case where bronze was introduced as an implement-making material did it suddenly displace the older materials, such as stone, bone, and wood. The New Stone Age and the Bronze Age cannot be so sharply distinguished as we are apt to think. Stone implements continued to be made and used. Knowing what we do about the general tendency for culture to change gradually, we should expect this to be the case. Moreover, the tools and implements of the Bronze Age vary from area to area, and from time to time. This age must not be regarded as a stage of culture development uniform everywhere in its evolution and similar in all places in content.

### **Invention of new modes of transport**

Adequate methods of transportation have been essential in the development of culture. One writer has concluded that "means of transport are at the base of civilization."<sup>1</sup> Lack of adequate transportation was one of the primary handicaps of Neolithic man. Limited in his means of transport, de-

<sup>1</sup>V. G. Childe, *The Bronze Age* (The Macmillan Company, 1930). Contains good account of early modes of transportation. See particularly pp. 49-52.

pendent upon crude log boats on water and his own carrying power on land, he was obviously narrowly circumscribed in his trade and contacts. During the twilight period of culture development now under review this handicap began to be removed.

One of the first significant developments in transport was the harnessing of animal motive power. Although Neolithic man possessed oxen and other tame beasts, he apparently never harnessed them to the plow or used them to carry loads; but early in the Bronze Age in the East the ox was yoked to the plow and set to work in the field. Perhaps in some cases the ox was used to pull loads placed on runners. The effective use, however, of animal motive power was dependent upon the introduction of the wheel, and with the invention of the wheel, "mankind set foot on the road that led to the motor car."<sup>1</sup> The earliest wheeled vehicles known have been brought to light from the tombs in Kish and Ur, in the lower valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, dating from about 3000 B. C. These wheels were very clumsy, being made from three solid pieces of wood, shaped to sectors of a circle, and clamped together with leather for tires. Wagons of four wheels were made, and later the two-wheeled chariot was introduced. In the history of the Near East chariots drawn by horses appeared in Egypt and in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates.

The invention of the wheel marks a milestone in human achievement. It has become fundamental in all forms of transportation on land and sea, and through the air. The endless applications and adaptations made of it since its appearance testify to its important role in the history of culture.

Parallel with the development of land transport went the acceleration of water transportation. Even late Neolithic man had crude boats; but no true ship antedates the Copper Age. By 3000 B. C. Egyptian, Aegean, and Syrian ships were crossing the Mediterranean. The fertility of the Mediterranean cultures is partially attributable to the use of the Mediterranean for transportation and communication, made possible by the invention of the ship.

<sup>1</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 49.



### The potter's wheel

The potter's wheel, invented in the early historic period, is an adaptation of the wheel to a new purpose. Here the wheel is placed in a horizontal position on a vertical axle and a simple contrivance is added for rotating the disc, at first by foot power. The date of its origin is somewhat uncertain. It was in use by at least 3000 B. C. in the Near East. Apparently, it was known somewhat later in Crete and southern Europe, and much later in western and northern Europe. Through its use beautiful pottery was produced, and produced much more rapidly than when Neolithic man had worked with his hands alone. The potter's wheel "not only facilitates the shaping of pieces, but it gives to them at the same time a regularity and symmetry which it would be very difficult to obtain otherwise; besides, the mechanical action of the workman modeling his piece during the rotating movement gives to the paste absolute homogeneity."<sup>1</sup> Thus this new device opened a new era in the advance of the ceramic arts.

### Social advance through trade and commerce

The history of civilization is the story, in part at least, of increasing contacts, of the breakdown of isolation, and of the establishment of commercial, political, and social relationships over increasingly wide areas. During the entire Paleolithic age population was scattered, isolated, and sparse. By the end of the Neolithic age this situation had been greatly altered, but still, in contrast with conditions obtaining in the historic cultures, man's opportunities for contacts, trade, and interchange of ideas, practices, and techniques were limited. By the end of the Neolithic age and in the dawn of history, trade had become rather extensive. The improvements in transportation previously referred to had made this possible. Especially in the western Asiatic region and the Mediterranean basin was there a constant interchange of goods, such as tools, pottery, weapons, ornaments, textiles, and grains. There was

<sup>1</sup>G. G. MacCurdy, *Human Origins: A Manual of Prehistory* (D. Appleton-Century Company, 1924), II, 81.

trading even with the hinterland of central Europe. And ultimately some of the artifacts and goods of the Mediterranean area reached western and northern Europe. Along with the goods went ideas and new techniques, resulting ultimately in modifications of the native cultures.

In the course of time, and as a result of increasing population and commercial expansion, the city emerged as a type of economic and social organization. Such a development was not possible during the Paleolithic period; it had its beginning toward the close of the Neolithic. With the opening of historical times the great cities of the ancient Near East began to emerge wherever highly productive soil or other favorable natural resources made possible the support of larger populations. The rise of cities is a most significant fact in the transition to a more advanced type of culture. Town life permits a stable sort of existence allowing culture to strike its roots more deeply and to thrive more luxuriously. It means a greater differentiation of pursuits and division of labor, hence greater skill, a wider variety of industrial and commercial arts, increased production of wealth. These are characteristics of advanced civilization, for as man progresses he depends more and more on others to do work for which he is not trained and for which his own interests and pursuits leave him no time. Complex political, social, and religious institutions; palaces, temples, and pyramids; writing, sculpture, philosophy, and science—these are largely the creations of men set free from the pressing need of providing material necessities. Town life, then, with all that the term implies, marks a culminating point in the cultural achievements of mankind over a thousand centuries. Its development in the Near East is a sign that we have entered the historical period of advanced civilizations.

### THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Western civilization began in the Near East. It was in Egypt and Mesopotamia that the simple village life of the late Neolithic period first gave way to highly developed urban centers. The very fact that the authors of the civilizations of

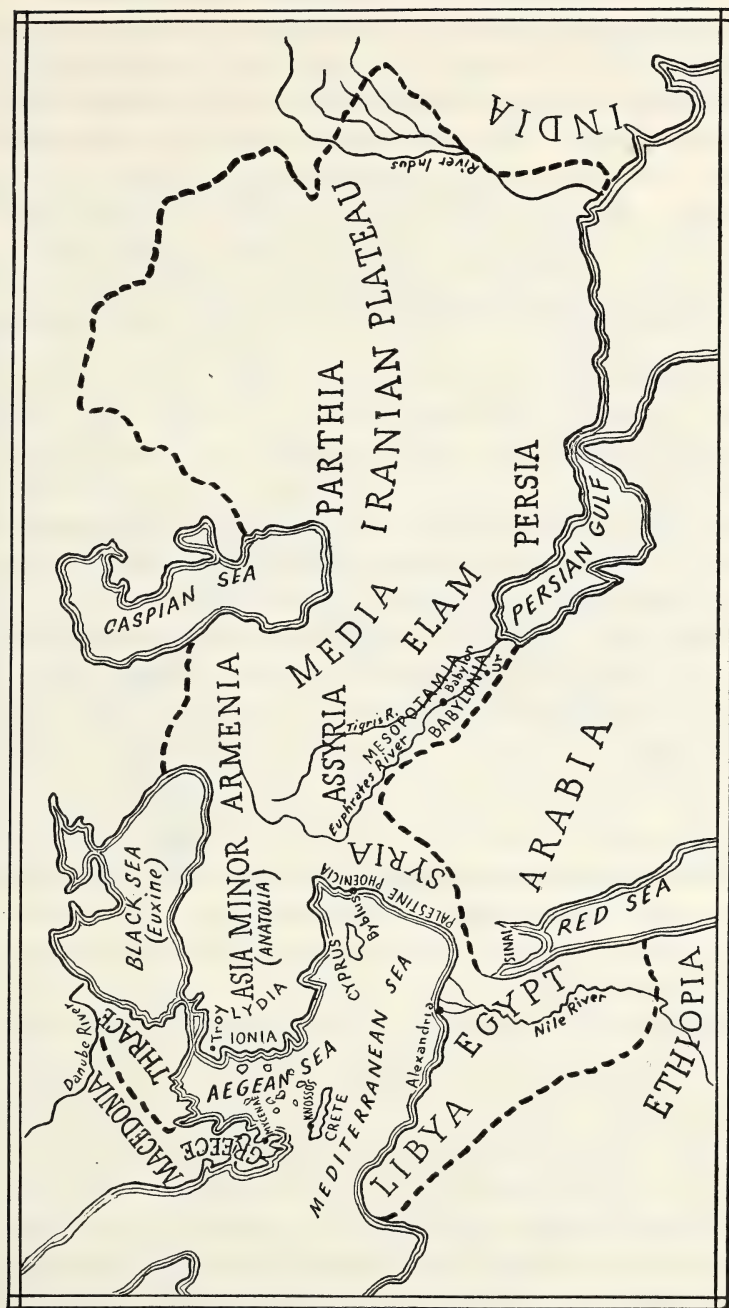
these countries had learned to write makes it for the first time possible to use written records as a guide to our investigations. We can now state with more confidence what man thought and accomplished, and we can explain in much greater detail how and why organized life developed as it did. We can also see more clearly the relation between our own civilization and those remote cultures of the East. No longer shall we say with Kipling that "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," for we shall discover that they did meet in ancient times. In fact, some of the most powerful germinating influences in history have come to the West out of the Orient, particularly from that part of the Orient, the Near East, which, by reason of its geographical proximity to the West, has affected European civilization in all stages of its history. A study of ancient cultures is therefore fundamental to an intelligent understanding of modern Western civilization.

In ancient and medieval times, the Mediterranean Sea was the center of the civilized world. It was perhaps the most important road of antiquity. It enabled peoples from east, west, north, and south to shift their homes and to intermingle with one another. The result was a fusion in which Oriental and Occidental cultures became inextricably mixed. Roman civilization in its later stages is an example of such a fusion, for it was, in the main, the product of a union between the Near East and two Occidental cultures, those of Greece and Italy. This Greco-Roman-Oriental cultural compound, with certain later admixtures, was transmitted as a heritage to the modern European world, mainly through the Middle Ages.

### **Chronological and geographical limits of the ancient Near East**

As soon as man learned to write and to reckon the passage of time with comparative accuracy, he began to compile records sufficiently exact to enable us to establish a chronology of his achievements. Still we cannot date with certainty the beginnings of civilization in the Near East, for every new archaeological expedition extends our knowledge of the past further back into antiquity. It will be sufficient for our purpose to





4. THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST (ABOUT 500 B. C.)

place the beginnings of Egyptian civilization in the fifth millennium B. C., for the date 4241 B. C. is generally, though not universally, accepted as that of the adoption of the solar calendar in Egypt. The development of Mesopotamian civilization was approximately contemporary with that of the Egyptian. The lower limit of this chapter is likewise indefinite, for the civilizations of the Near East did not cease to exist and to exert their influence upon the West when the eastern regions became subject to Greek and Roman political dominion. In general, however, we shall limit our study to developments before the fourth century B. C., when the Macedonian conqueror, Alexander the Great, came over from Greece and put an end to the Persian Empire. (See Table I, p. 187.)

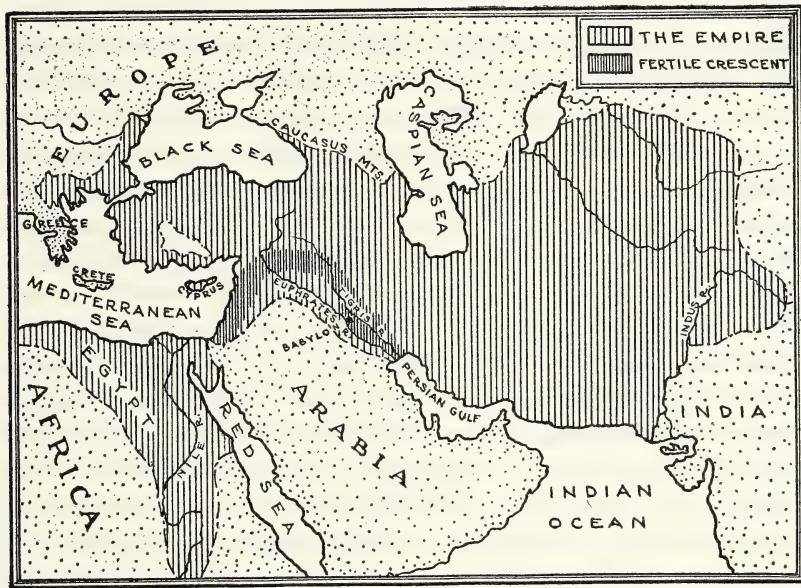
Geographically the cultures to be studied here developed at or near the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. Egypt extends southward into Africa from the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Along the eastern shore of the sea lies Syria, with Palestine occupying the southern part. Beyond Syria is the middle course of the Euphrates River, which, rising in the mountains of Armenia, turns westward in a wide bend, touches northern Syria, and then turns again in a southeasterly direction until it joins the Tigris River near the Persian Gulf. The valley between the two rivers in their middle and lower courses is known as Mesopotamia, the cradle of a great civilization which rivaled that of ancient Egypt. Beyond the Tigris is the Iranian plateau; along the central Tigris rises the hilly Assyrian land.

Lying between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean is Asia Minor, frequently called Anatolia, a peninsula which, thrusting itself prominently toward Europe, served in ancient times to bring Oriental culture to the very doors of the West. To the east of Anatolia lies the mountainous region of Armenia, where the Tigris and Euphrates have their rise. Since the cultures of Crete, the Aegean Islands, and Greece were closely related to that of western Anatolia, we might properly include them in this study, but it will be more convenient to defer consideration of them until we turn to the history of Greece.

From the standpoint of culture, the Phœnician settlements in northern Africa, Sicily, and Spain are a part of the Near East, though geographically they are remote from the eastern Mediterranean.

### Geographic factors in Near Eastern cultures

Within these areas and during this period of more than four thousand years, not one but many cultures rose and de-



5. THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

clined. There is, therefore, no cultural unit to be designated as *the* Near Eastern civilization. Broad variations occur both in the character of these cultures and in the degree of their development. First to develop a high civilization were Egypt and Mesopotamia. Next in point of time came Assyria. The cultures of the Phœnicians and the Hebrews developed much later. Last of the great Near Eastern powers to emerge was Persia. This enumeration is by no means complete, and some of the less important of those mentioned will of necessity receive scant attention. The aim will not be to present the history of Near Eastern societies, but to convey an idea of



the distinguishing characteristics of their cultures. Our particular interest will be to notice the significant additions to civilization during the period, additions that have entered into the cultural heritage of Western civilization.

The diversity which characterizes Near Eastern cultures springs essentially from differences of geographic environment and cultural contacts. Only in certain areas is the land richly endowed by nature. There are vast stretches of desert capable of supporting little or no life, and wide arid lands where living is a constant struggle. Obviously these conditions do not explain the displacing of the Neolithic by high civilizations in the Near East. The explanation is to be found in the richer areas where soil and climate produced conditions most suitable to the development of agriculture and the arts of an advanced civilization. These most favored regions were to be found in two great depressions cutting through the arid or desert lands about them—the valley of the Nile and the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. The winding course of the Nile has created a long, fertile valley, in its upper reaches hardly wider than the river itself, lower down broadening to ten or twenty miles. Beyond this narrow ribbon, to east and west, lie desert lands. Egypt, as a Greek historian said, “is a gift of the river,” for the Nile, with its alluvium-carrying floods, annually fertilizes the delta region at its mouth and a narrow strip along its banks. Likewise the Tigris and the Euphrates produce a wide gap of fertile land between the Arabian desert to the southwest and the highlands to the northeast. Like the Nile, these two rivers bring fresh soil and necessary moisture to the land called Mesopotamia at the head of the Persian Gulf. The inhabitants of these favored valleys can live the simple life of a subtropical country with a minimum of effort and a maximum of leisure. In Egypt and in Mesopotamia civilization has maintained itself continuously from antiquity to the present.

Though Egypt and Mesopotamia were most favored of all the lands of the Near East, the envy of their neighbors, one other area stands out in contrast with the arid regions about it. That is the Fertile Crescent. It lies across the Near East

somewhat like a gigantic quarter-moon, its back to the north against the hills, its open side facing south to the fringes of the desert of northern Arabia. In the west its arm lies along the shore of the Mediterranean, embracing Syria; its eastern arm rests over Babylonia; the intervening segment includes Assyria. Rainfall is slight over the Fertile Crescent, but it is sufficient to sustain broad grasslands contrasting with the desert wastes to the south and the barren hill region northward.

The wide differences suggested here between the richly endowed and the less favored lands about them help to explain the sharp variations in Near Eastern cultures and some of the historical movements of Near Eastern societies. The fertile agricultural districts furnished the foundations for a more rapid cultural advance and for the development of complex civilizations in which town life with its economic specialization and divisions into classes became a characteristic. But when we leave the valleys of Egypt and Mesopotamia a simpler form of society is found: the nomadic tribes of Arabia continued to lead their flocks from pasturage to pasturage as the seasons changed, much as did the patriarch Abraham; the herdsmen and hunters in the hills of Assyria, developing into a society of fierce fighters, contrast with the more settled communities of the plain. The Semitic Phoenicians were led by the advantages of their situation on the coast of the Mediterranean to become the middlemen of the Near East; they lived in cities and obtained their livelihood from trade and manufacture. The influence of variations in geographic environment is also evident in the migrations and military movements of Near Eastern history. Mesopotamia was repeatedly subject to pressure and conquest from envious neighbors; and Egypt, though far better protected by her isolated position, was overrun by great conquerors in the later period of her history. The grasslands of the Fertile Crescent were a perpetual object of contention between peoples pressing in from the fringes of the desert to the south and from the hill region to the north. The western horn of the Crescent was of great importance to all the Near East; it served as a common meeting ground for peoples on its borders, as a highway between

north and south, east and west, and as a battleground between rival empires. Through Syria the Babylonian monarchs pushed their way to the Mediterranean in the third millennium B. C., when that sea was becoming one of the chief highroads of antiquity. Toward that objective, too, Egyptians pushed their conquests after occupying the intervening Sinai peninsula for its mineral wealth.

The Near East was supplied with other natural resources essential to the creation of high civilization. The metals were of particular importance. Their appearance now for the first time marks, it will be recalled, one of the distinguishing features in the transition from Stone Age culture to the civilizations of the historic period. Copper, iron, and tin were of great importance. The copper mines in the otherwise unproductive peninsula of Sinai, conveniently situated for the Egyptian market, were important factors in the development of Egyptian culture. They were directly responsible for an early phase of Egyptian imperialism. Another source for copper was Cyprus, the island from which we derive the name of this metal. On the southeastern shores of the Black Sea iron was mined and smelted during the second millennium B. C., when the use of iron was rare or unknown elsewhere. Tin was to be found in Persia and in central Asia Minor. When it could not be found locally it was sometimes brought long distances; the Phoenicians journeyed even to the tin mines of Britain to supply their needs. Gold, used extensively for jewelry and other forms of artistic workmanship and for coinage, was found in western Asia Minor, in Egypt along the Red Sea, and along the southeastern shore of the Black Sea, as the legend of the Golden Fleece suggests. Of the other natural products, wood was perhaps the most important. The excellent timber of Cyprus made that island a valuable possession of the Egyptian Empire. In Phoenicia the cedars of Lebanon provided strong durable wood both for building ships and for such structures as the famous temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.

Finally, the Near East had the advantage of numerous waterways, both rivers and seas. At a time when travel by land was difficult and tedious, when the absence of roads made



wheeled traffic largely impossible, and when the chief means of transport were caravans of pack animals, water routes were obviously of great importance. Now with boats and ships at their command—facilities unknown to the Stone Age—Near Eastern peoples made trade and commerce important features of their civilization. The Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates became significant not only with reference to agricultural wealth but as great highways of trade. The same is true of the inland seas—the Red Sea and, above all, the Mediterranean, which were dotted by Egyptian and Phoenician ships. Tradition has it that Phoenicians in the employ of an Egyptian Pharaoh circumnavigated Africa. The Phoenicians traced their routes over the full extent of the Mediterranean and beyond, and appear even to have penetrated the Arabian Sea. Babylonians putting out from the Persian Gulf traded with peoples both east and west. By facilitating commerce and promoting exchange of ideas and experiences, Near Eastern waterways hastened the advance of culture, its enrichment, and its spread from group to group.

### Peoples of the ancient Near East

The builders of the Near Eastern civilizations present a medley of peoples. If we accept language relationships as a basis of classification, however, we may draw most of them into two major groups: (1) the Semitic-speaking peoples and (2) the Aryan or Indo-European-speaking groups.

The Semitic-speaking peoples include the Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Syrians, Hebrews, and Arabians. They were most prolific; their breeding place was probably South Arabia, from which wave after wave of emigrants poured forth in prehistoric and historic times to occupy neighboring lands. Some of them went westward into Egypt, where they combined with another great group, the Hamitic, and with other invaders coming from east, west, and south to form the Egyptian people.<sup>1</sup> Others made their way into

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<sup>1</sup>The language of the ancient Egyptians is usually classified with a third important language group called the Hamitic. It shows, however, marks of Semitic influence belonging to the prehistoric epochs.

Mesopotamia, where they played an important role in the development of the fertile land of Babylonia. Assyria was also occupied by Semites; and Syria, the land bordering on the eastern Mediterranean, received successive swarms of Semitic settlers.

The prairie land of southern Russia lying north of the Black and Caspian seas was probably the original home of the Aryans, and from there they spread at different times southward and eastward into Asia Minor, Persia, and India, and westward over most of Europe. It may be, as some have thought, that in prehistoric times there was a simple original speech from which the Indo-European tongues have been derived. But however pure the Aryan language may have been when the migrations began, differentiation soon took place, for in their wanderings the Aryans underwent marked changes in language, customs, government, and religion. Frequently their language was adopted by non-Aryan peoples among whom the Aryans settled. The Persians, who settled on the Iranian plateau east of the Tigris valley, provide the best example of an Aryan empire in the sphere of the ancient Near East. As our study carries us westward into Europe we shall meet the Indo-European peoples at numerous points, for the most important languages, ancient and modern—Greek, Latin, Gallic, German, English, Scandinavian, Slavic, and the Romance tongues—belong to the Indo-European language group.

There were other peoples in the lands of the Near East who were neither Semitic nor Aryan: (1) the Sumerians, who built the first advanced civilization in Mesopotamia and later gave place to invading Semites; (2) the Elamites in the mountains to the east, ready to occupy the fertile valleys when opportunity offered; (3) the Armenoids in Anatolia, serving as a substratum for the population of historical times. These and others played parts in the history of the ancient Near East that would demand attention in a fuller treatment of the subject.

Nothing has been said thus far about races in the Near East. Our division of the great mass of the populations into

Semitic-speaking peoples and Aryan or Indo-European speaking peoples has no necessary significance as to race. It is well known that persons of all races may be found speaking a given language not their own. Present-day anthropologists would not attempt to determine race relationships on the basis of similarities of language. The Aryans are sometimes spoken of as the "Aryan Race," but however pure racially they may have been originally, the group lost its purity when it began to move. It is doubtful that there were any "pure" racial stocks in the Near East in historical times. By reason of the extensive movements of peoples in this area, racial intermixture was well on its way by the close of the Neolithic period. If we adhere to Kroeber's classifications, we should place the peoples of both of these great language groups—Semites and Aryans—among the Caucasoids; but there is this difference: the Mediterranean race appears to have been dominant among the original Semitic-speaking group, while the original Aryan peoples were predominantly Nordic. Both of these, it will be recalled, are classified as subdivisions of the Caucasoids.

### **Economic life and social groupings**

The extent to which Near Eastern peoples became differentiated into social groups or classes was largely determined by geographic environment. In those favored lands where the simple village life had given place to more complex town and city communities, society became correspondingly complex. Urban life meant greater specialization, and greater specialization meant increasing social differentiation. Commerce and the industrial arts greatly enriched the more advanced civilizations. In Babylonia and Assyria, about 2000 B. C., and later among the Phoenicians, industry and trade were dominant. In poorer districts pastoral peoples like the Semitic herdsmen of Arabia counted their wealth largely in their herds and flocks. Aside from a few exceptions like these, Near Eastern cultures were founded on agriculture as the essential source of wealth and power. Those who possessed the land, or those who controlled it, and the multitudes who tilled it



emerge, therefore, as important contrasting classes in the societies of the Near East.

In prehistoric times, before man had established a fixed, settled abode, it would seem likely that he enjoyed a large degree of freedom of a kind. Private property in land did not then exist. When history dawns in the Near East the scene has changed. For great masses of men the greater security of civilization had been purchased at the cost of freedom. The tillers of the soil found they did not own it. In Egypt all of the land was, legally, the property of the king, though priests and nobles held valuable estates from which they obtained immense revenues. Outside of Egypt, particularly in Mesopotamia, much of the land belonged to the king; organizations of priests, nobles, and other private persons held the rest. To these the cultivators owed varying obligations. Their status was not the same in all the cultures of the Near East, nor did it remain fixed during the long period under consideration. There were among them tax-paying, free cultivators or peasants; rent-paying tenant farmers; serfs owing various obligations; and large numbers of slaves. Beyond the arable lands where pasturage supported herds and flocks, nomadic herdsmen supplanted the tillers of the soil. Their social status was higher and they led a much freer existence, driving their herds over wide areas to find pasturage as the seasons changed.

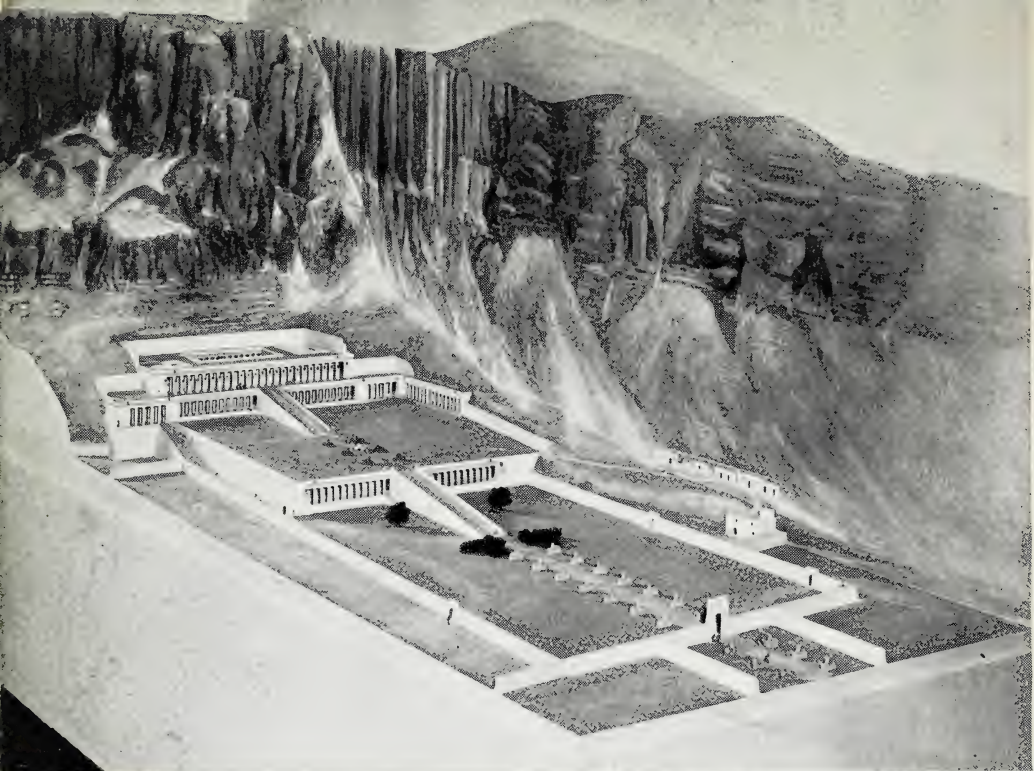
Slaves came to supply an important part of the labor power in Near Eastern societies. They were recruited for a great variety of services, and their position up and down the social scale varied accordingly. Their place as agricultural workers has already been noticed. In Babylonia and Egypt slave gangs were used to build walls and dikes, dig canals, and work in the mines; these probably represent the most degraded station in the social scale. Others fared much better as artisans in the household, manufacturing textiles, pottery, and metal ware. In the specialized industries of the towns a large proportion of the skilled craftsmen were at first slaves.

The sources of slaves were various. Largely they were prisoners of war whose lives were preserved because they pos-



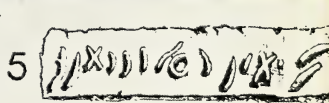
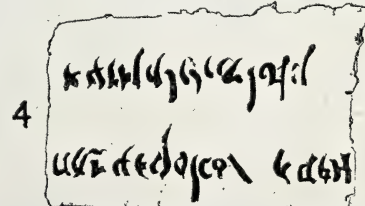
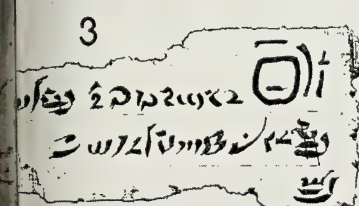
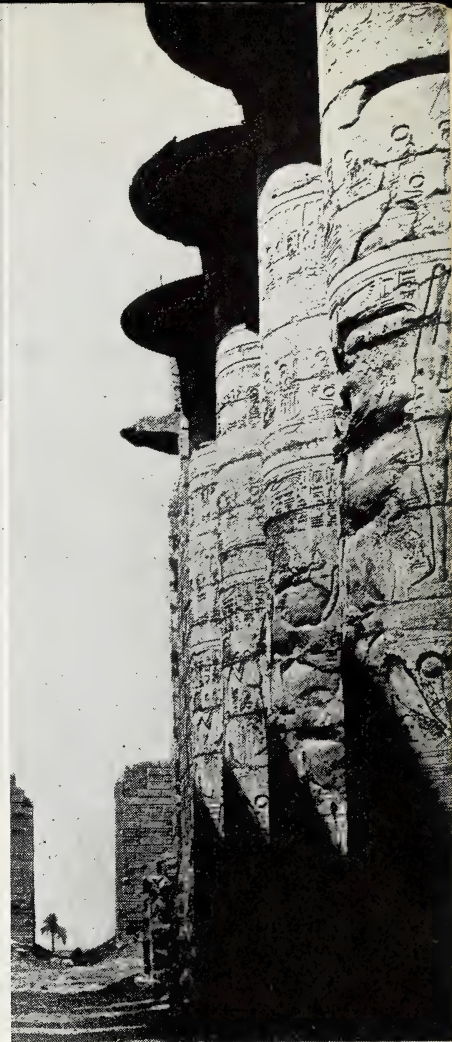
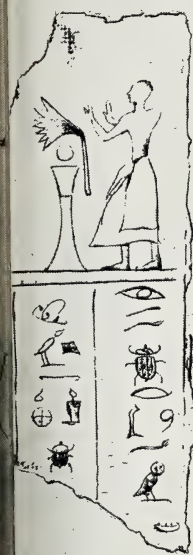
The large picture is of an Assyrian bas-relief in alabaster depicting winged beings pollinating the sacred tree of life (885-860 B. C.). The legend is written in cuneiform. The lower pictures are: (1) A winged bull from Assyria (885-860 B. C.), having the head and wings of divine beings. Enormous alabaster figures like this one were built into the sides of gateways of palaces to support the brick arches above. (2) A Babylonian alabaster cylinder (about 2000 B. C.) showing the Sun-god emerging from the Gates of the East. Such a cylinder was used to seal clay tablets. The impression was made by rolling the cylinder along the clay surface. (3) A panel of enameled brick from the sacred way in Babylon, built by King Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 B. C.). The figure is composed of glazed white, tan, green, and blue bricks. In Assyria, stone was available; but in Babylon there was no stone and glazed brick was used instead. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)





Top: A model of the temple of Queen Hat-shepsut as it appeared when completed in 1480 B. C. The lower pictures are: (1) Head of a Sphinx in red granite from the central courtyard of the temple of Queen Hat-shepsut. (2) Painted limestone head of Hat-shepsut, represented in the aspect of Osiris, the god of the dead. (3) Black granite statue of Merneptah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, who reigned from 1225-1215 B. C. (4) Statuette of the god Amun cast in solid gold (1501-1447 B. C.) (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)





The upper left picture is a detail, on papyrus, from the Book of the Dead, one of a number of books designed to guide the souls of men into the realm of the gods. This scene shows the Judgment, where the heart of a princess is weighed in the balance against a figure of the goddess of Truth (about 1025 B. C.). (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.) At the right are sculptured columns of the Great Temple of Karnak (14th century B. C.). The first three drawings represent specimens of the three types of Egyptian writing: (1) linear hieroglyphic, (2) hieratic, (3) demotic; the other three drawings represent Phoenician writing (4) on papyrus, (5) on stone in relief, and (6) on stone in intaglio.



Upper left: Ancient model of an Egyptian bed with characteristic wooden pillow (1580-1350 B. C.). Upper right: Headdress of a lady of the court (1501-1447 B. C.) made of gold and originally inlaid with carnelian and glass. The head is a cast of a sculptor's model of the same period. Center left: A casket for toilet articles, with mirror, razors, whetstones, and cosmetic jars (1900-1840 B. C.). Center right: Egyptian household furniture, consisting of a table, a small stool, a folding stool, a chair (1600-1500 B. C.), and a clothes hamper (1450 B. C.). Lower left: Collar of flowers and berries, which was placed around the neck of a guest at a banquet (1350 B. C.). Lower right: Ancient models of a grandee's traveling boat going down the Nile, with its kitchen tender following (about 2000 B. C.). These were funerary models that were placed in the tomb for the use of the departed spirit, whose existence was supposed to duplicate that of the living. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)



essed valuable knowledge of the arts and crafts, or were of great service to kings in the performance of public works. Others came from among the rulers' own subjects, men who were forced into bond-servantship and slavery because they were unable to pay their debts, or who had voluntarily given up their freedom as the easiest available means of obtaining a security which they were unable to find outside of bondage. Slaves were not entirely without rights under the law, nor was their servile status always perpetual. In some places they were permitted to own property and were able to buy their freedom.

Town society presented a variety of facets, particularly where commercial interests were important. With the development of maritime activities in such countries as Babylonia, Egypt, and Phoenicia, merchants, sailors, and rowers became an important element in the social compound. The activities of merchants usually began under the protection of kings who favored the development of trade within their own countries and, especially, the exchange of the products of various countries. With the growth of business enterprise, capital became a pressing need, moneylenders emerged, and usury developed as a common practice. In the town communities there were other freemen, some of them wealthy, employing large staffs of servants; some, relatively free from the obligation to make a living, devoting themselves to intellectual pursuits of various kinds.

Highest of all in the social pyramid were organized groups centering about the priests and the kings. In the earlier period, in Egypt and in Babylon, the priestly class, surrounded by their magicians, scribes, and other subordinates, stood at the top. For a long period they formed the only centers of civilizing influence. They were zealous keepers of knowledge and the preservers of tradition. Their great power and influence was maintained economically by immense revenues obtained from extensive landholdings. The centers of royal power were the courts. There, about the kings, were congregated their counselors, officials, keepers of the records and accounts, captains, and guards. It was from the court group,



in Egypt and Babylonia, that a later class of nobility developed.

### POLITICAL FEATURES OF EGYPTIAN AND MESOPOTAMIAN CIVILIZATION

Political integration marks the general trend in the history of civilization—that is, the trend has been from local organization and authority toward a wider and wider association of peoples. To the extent that such a development brings increasingly large aggregations into a coöperative union for the betterment of society, it may be regarded as evidence of social advance. In the course of Near Eastern history this political process gradually worked itself out, earlier city-states and small territorial kingdoms coalescing until they encompassed the whole country. Later came periods of political expansion through military conquest, when one separate civilization after another was brought under the yoke of powerful rulers to form far-flung empires.

The earlier phases of political expansion can be studied best in the two great river valleys of the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates. There the geographic environment had a decisive influence in the centralizing of political authority over increasingly large areas. We begin with the rivers, for their floods, annually renewing the fertility of the lowlands with fresh soil brought down from the hills, largely determined the character of the nascent cultures. Near the mouths of the rivers the land was abundantly supplied with moisture, for centuries of floods had created great swamps. In these swamps islands suitable for habitation gradually formed. Other settlements on the edge of the flooded region shared in the wealth of the alluvium and in the moisture of the swampy land. During the long hot summers the water receded and the soil was used for crops. Now since each community was dependent upon the water and earth brought down by the rivers, constant care was necessary to see that the river did not change its course, or that some energetic neighbor did not divert the water into other channels, thus robbing the original possessors of their means of living. Canals and irrigating ditches were needed

to protect what the community had acquired; they served to dry up the swamps, and thus by extending the area suitable for cultivation to make it possible for the community to increase in wealth and numbers. In the course of time the swamps disappeared; canals and reservoirs were built to provide moisture when the hot sun threatened to bake the area over which the floods had passed and to render it unfit for agriculture. As the arable land grew in extent, villages once separated by swamps found themselves near neighbors, and their common economic interests induced them to coöperate and to unite.

### Political integration

Large irrigation enterprises, however, cannot be built without the coöperation of all members of the community benefiting from them. Communities, therefore, during this early period prospered in proportion to the ability of their leaders and the disciplined industry of the people. Dikes and ditches had to be kept in repair and the water-supply guarded, by force if necessary, against envious neighbors. Absolute submission to the welfare of the community was a first requisite for existence. Unification of neighboring communities made greater undertakings possible; and this in turn led to further unions, until the whole land was a network of irrigation canals, and the whole people became united under one head.

We are able to trace this political integration in its later stages both in Egypt and in Mesopotamia. In Egypt it culminated about 3400 B. C. in the unification of North and South, two kingdoms which were themselves the products of earlier unions reaching far back into the prehistoric period. In Egypt, too, we see the part played by irrigation in the life and politics of the people, for in an early monument the Pharaoh or king is represented as chief engineer and benefactor of the land, digging the ditches which the country needed. In Mesopotamia, the cities which were the units in the larger unions played a more important part than they did in Egypt. Each of them in turn seems to have exercised dominion over the others, and in the days of complete unification the cities retained numerous rights and privileges. Unification in Meso-

potamia was not always so complete as in Egypt, but the necessity of coöperation was no less the cause of union.

### **Oriental absolutism**

Since religion played a much greater part in the life of the early societies than it does in a more advanced age, it is not surprising to find that it placed its mark permanently upon government in these countries. The god of the tribe or of the city was in a sense simply a divine member of the community; and the leader of the community became the medium of communication between the people and the god. Thus in Mesopotamia the kings were originally priest-kings, represented as ruling by divine right. Hammurabi, for example, one of the greatest Semitic kings to rule in Babylonia, is pictured on the stone tablet which bears his code as receiving the law directly from the god of justice, just as Moses is recorded to have received stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments from the God of the Hebrews on Mt. Sinai. In Egypt the Pharaohs were recognized as gods in their own persons, and in other lands we find in one form or another an intimate contact between secular and divine rule, as in the case of the early Hebrews. In Egypt, where the king himself was god, we find the most thorough-going absolutism. Legally all of the land was his, and all of the inhabitants were his servants. In theory, peasants, artisans, state officials, soldiers, and priests were on a dead level of uniformity, subjects of their divine Pharaoh.

Thus in the governments of the ancient East the interaction of religious and geographic forces produced absolutism, whether the rulers were worshiped as gods incarnate, or were regarded as priests and representatives of the gods with power to protect their people from such manifestations of divine force as floods, droughts, and pestilence, and to defend them against the gods of hostile tribes anxious to seize their land. Hence we may regard the typical government of the East as an absolute monarchy, and picture the people as well-disciplined and submissive subjects unaccustomed to freedom and unable to appreciate or to use its benefits.



### **Empires of the Near East**

Though the kings of Egypt and Babylonia attempted from time to time to establish empires, their success was limited. The absence of ethnic or cultural unity made it difficult to create a stable union among the heterogeneous peoples of the Near East. Furthermore, the early empire-builders failed because they were unable to devise effective political organization. They were content with annual payments of tribute, and they interfered little with local governments in conquered lands. Revolt was always easy, since the slowness of communication and travel made it difficult for the king either to forestall revolts or to act effectively against rebellious subjects.

The Assyrians, however, created an empire on more stable foundations. By 700 B. C., the conquest of neighboring peoples had brought a considerable part of the ancient Near East under their sway. Their empire embraced the whole of the Fertile Crescent, much of the northern hinterland, and, for a short period of time, the valley of the Lower Nile. Assyrian power rested on a strong, well-equipped standing army, in which an efficient force of cavalry facilitated rapid movement in times of crisis. The Assyrians also devised a system of provincial administration. To minimize opportunities for revolt they deported subject peoples to far-distant lands, replacing them with colonists from other parts of the empire. Although this practice tended to break down the barriers between different ethnic groups and cultures, and although there was much intercourse through trade and intermarriage, diversity was greater than uniformity, and the empire eventually disintegrated.

Greatest of all the empires in the ancient Near East was the Persian, built largely under the leadership of Cyrus in the sixth century B. C. By a succession of conquests, Media, Assyria, Anatolia, Babylonia, Syria, Egypt, and Thrace (in eastern Europe) were brought under Persian sway. Eastward the empire extended to the frontiers of India. For the first time in history the Near East was united politically. The

union lasted until the death of the Macedonian, Alexander the Great (323 B. C.), conqueror of the Persian king and successor to his throne. The Persian Empire was more stable than that of the Assyrians, largely because the Persians were able to establish political machinery suitable for the government of widely scattered lands. Conquered territory was divided into administrative provinces, ruled by governors adequately supported by military forces. Within the provinces, subject peoples were permitted a considerable amount of local control so long as they dutifully paid tribute and remained loyal. A second royal official was appointed for each province to watch over both subject peoples and governors, and to report to the king any sign of insubordination or revolt. Rapid and easy communication was secured by the establishment of a royal post-road with stations at convenient intervals where attendants stood ready at all times to speed the king's messengers on their way.

### RELIGION IN NEAR EASTERN CIVILIZATIONS

Though evidence has been found pointing to the existence of religious beliefs in the Stone Age,<sup>1</sup> what the religions of that period were like can never be definitely known. To those primitive forms of religion authorities have applied the term *animism*. Animism is a belief that the world of nature is inhabited by spirits and that these spirits are the moving force among objects visible to the eye and in man's own body. The motions of moon and stars, of air and water, of animals and man; the powerful productive forces of the sun and the earth—behind all these was thought to be the impelling power of spirits. And since the powers of these spirits were sometimes baneful and sometimes helpful to man, primitive religious practices were bound up with rites and ceremonies designed to win over the good spirits and to ward off the evil ones. Hence those who understood the mysterious ways of propitiating the spirits occupied high positions of power in the community.

Animism possibly continued among some of the peoples of

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 142-143.

the Near East after the dawn of history. But most characteristic of the religions of the period was polytheism. Spirits or souls were no longer conceived as formless; they usually appeared now in the form of persons, persons like men, but unlike men they possessed superhuman powers; these beings were gods. Thus ancient man came to believe in many gods—hence the name *polytheism* applied to his religions. As earlier man had conceived spirits to be bound up with the well-being of the community, so now did ancient man place the gods in similar relation to his elementary needs and experiences. The chief objects of his worship were the powers of the gods, venerated as favorable and beneficent, or feared as agencies of destruction.

In modern Western civilization religion knows no boundary lines, for, generally speaking, Christianity is common to the whole Western world; but in the ancient Near East religions were as diversified as the early cultures. There was no Near Eastern religion; there were many religions. Cities and tribes worshiped their own ancestral divinities, and, although political union sometimes resulted in the grouping of local divinities into families subject to one supreme god, as in Egypt and Babylonia, political unity under the imperial states just described never resulted in religious unity, for each culture tended to develop a religion peculiar to itself. Thus, even where we find an apparent similarity of religious beliefs and practices, the final forms show important differences.

### **Worship of the sun and of the Great Mother**

By the time when the transition from animism to polytheism took place, man had come to discriminate between spirits whose powers touched him remotely and those whose influence was perpetually affecting the vital interests of his life. The sun, the earth, the moon, the rivers and other waters exerted such influence; hence it was the personified spirit-forces associated with them that became the chief and most widely worshiped gods. This fact explains in part why the sun was almost universally worshiped in the East. Its immediate influence upon the lives of men was apparent to all, for its rays promoted the



growth of vegetation after the annual flood, and its deadly heat in midsummer was an ever-present reminder of its great power. Since its course regulated the seasons, the sun came to be regarded in many places as the supreme deity, ruling over gods and men alike. On widely scattered monuments we see pictured the solar disk, sometimes, as in Egypt, with its rays terminating in hands, to represent the creative power of the sun's heat. In Persia, the god of light, Ahura Mazda, was regarded as the champion of righteousness against the powers of darkness and evil.

The tendency of the ancient Near East to deify natural forces beneficent to the community is again illustrated in the worship of the Great Mother, personifying the fertility of nature. In Egypt she was Isis, the wife of Osiris. In some places the goddess was identified with mother Earth; but however conceived, she was regarded as the wife of one or the other of the major male divinities of the country. In Anatolia, the Great Mother, sometimes called Cybele, or Diana, was apparently the greatest of all local divinities until the invading Aryans introduced the god of the sky, represented as standing on the tops of the mountains wielding thunder and lightning. Then the Great Mother took her place beside the god of the invaders as the wife and equal of her husband. It is not strange to find that the home of this powerful goddess was the land where the Greeks localized the legend of the Amazons.

The worship of these female divinities was not limited to the East, for when Rome had established her supremacy over the Mediterranean world, the cults of Isis and Magna Mater became popular in Rome, and in time they affected even Christian beliefs and practice. When pagans became Christians, it was impossible for them to sever all relations with the past, and thus Mary, the mother of Jesus, came to occupy a place analogous to that of Isis. In fact, our Madonnas, as representations of the divine mother, are lineal descendants of the representations of Isis in ancient art. Likewise some of the female saints took over the characteristics of the great female divinities, together with their ancient shrines and cult practices.

**Morality and the future life**

Among the Egyptians the eternal mysteries of life and death, night and day, the fertility of spring and summer followed by the death of vegetation in fall and winter, are all fused in the mythological story of Osiris, killed and dismembered by his rival, Set, and brought back to life again by the devotion of his wife, Isis. To these original concepts the Egyptians added that of good and evil, barbarism and civilization; for Set represents the baneful forces of nature and the evil enemies of civilization, while Osiris and Isis represent justice and right. So Osiris came to be the king of the dead, the righteous judge, before whom all mortals must appear after death. The future happiness of individuals was thought to depend upon their actions in this life. Out of these conceptions the Egyptian religion developed a distinctive code of morality, more advanced than that of any other primitive nature worship. The interest of Egyptians in a future life is evidenced also by their pyramids and other monumental tombs, enduring witnesses to a belief in a life after death.

In the course of time the vitality of the ethical code declined; magic took the place of right living, and the priests profited by the superstitious fear of the people. For a brief moment there was a reform. An idealistic Egyptian monarch, Ikhnaton, tried to uproot priestly power and popular superstition by substituting one god for the multitude of gods then worshiped throughout the Egyptian Empire. Ikhnaton's deity was Aten, the sun's disk, creator and father of mankind. Aten was not a tribal god; he belonged to no one city, and to no nation. Instead he was to become the universal god of all races, tribes, and cities. After the failure of this attempt to establish monotheism by legal enactment, Egypt again lapsed into polytheism.

In Babylonia, although a barren and shadowy existence of the soul was not denied, interest in this life was stronger than interest in the life to come. Thus the priest's function was to secure worldly blessings for his clients; and since the sun and the moon and the stars were regarded as gods influencing the

affairs of men, the priests began to study their position in the heavens, to collect data about their movements, and to devise a system by which the future could be foretold. Thus astrology arose, a pseudo-science, out of which astronomy was eventually to grow.

### EGYPTIAN ARTS AND SCIENCES

The intellectual life of ancient peoples reveals the interests that were of greatest moment to their existence. In Egypt, where belief in a life after death was dominant, the influence of religion is deeply stamped upon literature, art, and architecture. The walls of the tombs were covered with inscriptions intended to secure a happy life for the deceased in the after world. Other forms of literature are of course preserved: hymns, accounts of victories won by the Egyptian Pharaohs, and biographical records of distinguished men; but for the most part these were intended not so much as a record of the past as a preparation for the future. The art of Egypt also emphasizes belief in a future life. The first task of sculpture was to create a likeness of the deceased which could be placed in his tomb; and since life after death was conceived to be, in many respects, like that of this world, it became customary to represent on the walls of the tombs scenes from the daily life of the men who were to occupy them. Thus sculpture and painting rapidly improved in technique and execution. Architecture, too, was fostered, for tombs, pyramids, and mortuary temples were in constant demand, and the desire for permanent residences for the dead made the use of stone essential and tended to produce buildings more and more monumental.

Science also progressed. In this field the Egyptians were practical rather than theoretical. The demand for those impressive tombs, the pyramids, could hardly have been supplied without a knowledge of the principles of the inclined plane, the lever, and the pulley. Since the preservation of the body after death was an essential part of Egyptian religious belief, knowledge of embalming was acquired. In this fashion the study of medicine and human anatomy was stimulated among the Egyptians.



A richer gift to civilization was the calendar. By careful computation it has been determined that an elaborated calendar came into use in Egypt in the year 4241 B. C., perhaps the earliest recorded date. The Egyptians first devised a lunar calendar and later a more accurate one based on the rise of the star Sirius, which practically differed very little from the solar calendar. When it is remembered that the Nile was, and is, the very life of Egypt, and that its prosperity then as now depended upon the regularity of the floods, it will be understood that the recurrence of this event challenged the Egyptians to devise some exact system of reckoning time. The calendar was the result. Its invention was made possible by reason of the considerable knowledge of astronomy which both the Egyptians and the Babylonians possessed. According to the Egyptian calendar the year was made to consist of twelve months of thirty days each, with five days added to each year. The use of the calendar passed in time to surrounding peoples and ultimately to almost all parts of the world, though in a modified form.

In another way the flooding of the Nile stimulated scientific advance. The Nile floods must have been constantly at work obliterating landmarks and thus affording employment to professional surveyors. So the Egyptians became familiar with the practical application of geometrical principles; for geometry, as its name suggests, was originally concerned with the measurement of land.

### **The development of writing**

As indicated earlier in this chapter, Egypt played a conspicuous part in the development of a form of writing which after certain transformations became the alphabet of the Western world. The many needs of an advanced culture made necessary a more adequate form of writing than pictographic writing afforded. The hieroglyphic system which emerged to meet such needs was also pictographic, but it marked an advance in that it used pictures or drawings to convey sounds as well as pictures of things and acts. Thus a picture of the human eye might be used to convey the sound of

the letter I; the picture of a bee, to convey the sound of the letter B. In other words, pictures or symbols were coming to be used as syllables or sounds which were combined to form words. Beyond this stage the Egyptians did not go in the development of script.

The next step apparently carries us to Syria. There another system of writing was employed. Whether it was influenced by the Egyptian system is not known, but it has the same basis—that of using a combination of certain simple lines for the expression of the various sounds of the human speech. In Greece, most of the letters kept their Semitic names, with slight changes due to differences of pronunciation. While certain simplifications and changes have been made throughout the alphabet, the word “alphabet” itself affords significant evidence of its origin and spread; for *alpha* (our “A”) is of Egyptian or Semitic origin, and *beta* is the Semitic *beth* (our “B”).

It is not unlikely that papyrus, the famous writing material of the Egyptians, came to Greece, along with the alphabet, by way of Byblus, a town on the coast of Syria; for the Greek word for papyrus is identical with the name of that city. The Greek word for books is *biblia*, and from this word is obviously derived the name of that collection of Semitic literature which we call the Bible. The Phoenician city, Byblus, has, therefore, though indirectly, supplied the name of the Holy Book of Western civilization.

### ASPECTS OF BABYLONIAN INTELLECTUAL LIFE

The intellectual life of the Babylonians is revealed, in large measure, in the interesting history of the development of writing among them. In Mesopotamia, as in Egypt, early writing was pictographic in form. Having no papyrus, the inhabitants of Mesopotamia were clever enough to find a cheap substitute in the clay of the region, which, when soft, could be easily marked and, when baked, was almost indestructible. Since it is not easy to draw pictures in soft clay, the symbols were soon conventionalized until they resembled groups of wedge-shaped

incisions. We call this form of writing cuneiform. The Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians employed it for the many permanent records required by their extensive and complex commercial life. Their widespread mercantile and political contacts with the outside world disseminated it far beyond the boundaries of Mesopotamia. For a time it was the generally accepted medium for the exchange of ideas in the Near East, used alike for all languages.

### **The contribution of Babylonian records to knowledge**

Cuneiform script was convenient likewise for other than business records. The Babylonians, being unconcerned about the future life, could devote their attention to a study of the past. In this way history developed. The Babylonians preserved, too, the legends of the country in which they dwelt. These traditions are particularly interesting to us, for comparison shows that the stories of the Creation and of the Flood which we find in the Book of Genesis have parallels so close in Babylonian records as to make it certain that they have a common origin. So, too, the story of the Tower of Babel appears to have a kernel of historical truth, for one of the commonest features of the Mesopotamian landscape was the stepped tower, the ziggurat, which, like the obelisks of Egypt, was erected in honor of various gods and formed a part of the Mesopotamian temple structures.

The libraries of burned brick tablets contain also the scientific records of Babylonia. Study of the heavens had created a body of astronomical data. This was preserved and steadily enlarged until the sky was mapped and the movements of sun, moon, and planets were charted. The records are so exact and so complete that they have been of great assistance to historians in their efforts to establish Babylonian chronology. The Babylonian calendar divided the year into twelve months of 29 or 30 days each; day was divided into twelve hours of about double the length of our hours. Thus our present method of measuring time is a heritage of ancient Babylonian civilization. The division of the circle into 360 degrees is another contribution of ancient Babylonia to scientific reckon-



ing. This useful combination of the decimal and the duodecimal system is found also in Babylonian weights and measures, some of which have been passed on to western Europe and modern times only slightly altered.

### **Babylonian architecture**

Architecturally, Mesopotamia is a land of clay. This building material seems to us prosaic enough, but when formed into brightly colored tiles and used as facing for unburned brick walls, it gave to the temples and palaces a richness well suited to a land of intense sunlight. To understand the importance and the permanence of this tradition in building one has only to visit a Mohammedan mosque, where the tiles rival the work of their Mesopotamian prototypes, and where the minaret has replaced the older ziggurat. Nor must we forget that the barrel vault and the dome, so important in later Western architecture, had their origin in Babylonia. (For summary of Near Eastern civilization see Appendix, p. 1035.)

## **THE DIFFUSION OF NEAR EASTERN CULTURES**

The history of the Near East affords an impressive demonstration of the importance of culture-diffusion in the advance of civilization. Whatever isolation may have existed among Eastern cultures in prehistoric times had pretty well disappeared during the period now under discussion. Widespread military conquests, migrations, and trade multiplied contacts between peoples and constituted the major channels through which culture elements diffused over the area and became the possession of one people after another.

### **Within the Near Eastern area**

This process is strikingly illustrated by events centering about the Mesopotamian region, a focal point of influences touching most of the civilizations of the Near East. The first advanced civilization to develop there was the civilization of the Sumerians. When Semitic conquerors took possession of the country in the third millennium B. C., they adopted the major

portion of the Sumerian culture—their laws, religion, writing, arts, and business methods. Out of the union of these cultures—Sumerian and Semitic—arose the great Babylonian civilization. The land and canal systems of the Babylonians, their form of city-state government, their business and trade organizations, their system of weights and measures, and other elements of their culture were in time adopted by the Assyrians. In the course of time elements of that Assyrian-Babylonian heritage were carried by the Assyrians to the Phoenicians and Hebrews through the westward sweep of their conquests. Then came the last of the great conquests before Alexander's achievements, when the Persians (sixth century B. C.) overran the whole of the Near East, gave two hundred years of peace to the land, and extended the Assyrian-Babylonian culture from Media eastward to the frontiers of India. In a similar manner one could demonstrate the importance of Egypt as a focus in the spread of cultural influences, although her influence, owing largely to differences in the history of the two areas, was less extensive than that of the Mesopotamian civilizations.

The more peaceful contacts of trade provided other avenues over which things and ideas passed from one people to another in the Eastern area. Over the waterways and the land routes acquisitive traders pushed their way to every locality where economic needs and the prospect of gain led them on. With the advance of civilization such demands multiplied. Here it was the need of the industrial and the fine arts; there it was a demand for raw materials, for no single society was so well endowed with natural resources as not to require the products of some of its neighbors—timber or metals or foodstuffs. When contacts, commercial and otherwise, were extended from Eastern to European communities, elements of Eastern civilizations began to stimulate the backward cultures of the Mediterranean area.

#### **The transfusion of Eastern culture westward**

The spread of elements of Eastern cultures westward is one of the salient facts in the rise of civilization in Europe—first to

Greece, later throughout the Mediterranean area, ultimately throughout Europe. The Mediterranean Sea, furnishing easy water transportation to the four corners of the Mediterranean world, so promoted the exchange of goods and ideas and so facilitated the mingling of peoples and their cultures that the dividing lines between East and West often become obliterated.

At the very first appearance of the Greeks in history, the Near East began to affect and modify their culture. When they entered Greece, they found a people with Anatolian connections; and when they crossed the Aegean and settled in Asia Minor, they intermarried with the natives and took over much of their culture. Here arose the first bloom of the culture that we call Greek. To the Anatolian Greeks as subjects of Persia the gates were opened wide to Eastern contacts. Nor must we forget that Greek traders and mercenaries were welcomed to Egypt in the last days of Egyptian greatness. The adoption of the alphabet by the Greeks is convincing proof of early contact between Greece and the Phoenician coast. As we have seen, the Phoenician traders at one time dominated the Mediterranean. "They were international traders, trafficking both in their own wares and in those of Egypt and Asia. About their ships gathered curious Greeks, eager to buy their ornaments, trinkets, glassware, blue porcelains, carved ivories, costly inlaid furniture, engraved bronze and silver platters, purple stuffs, and woolen chitons."<sup>1</sup> Later, when the Greeks displaced the Phoenicians in supremacy in the Mediterranean, their commercial contacts with Eastern peoples were multiplied. More important was the fusion of Greek and Eastern cultures which followed Alexander's conquest in 323 B. C. Then the Greeks moved eastward and settled in the heart of the Near East. Although the influence of these Greco-Oriental relations upon Greek philosophy, science, and art is difficult to evaluate, it must have been very great.

Rome, too, from early times was in contact with the East. Her neighbors on the north, in Etruria, were the Etruscans,

<sup>1</sup>Albert Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936), p. 81.



who probably had come from Asia Minor bringing with them some of the culture of the East. For a time Etruscan princes ruled in Rome, and from them the Romans learned many ideas and practices which they never forgot. In a later chapter we shall have occasion to indicate how the Roman conquest of Carthage, Phoenicia's great colony, affected Roman ideas and practices. Possibly even more important than Carthage and Etruria for the spread of Eastern ideas among the Romans was the great stream of slaves which flowed into Italy when Rome began to expand eastward. They brought with them, among other things, their religions and their superstitions; and by the time Christianity began to spread, there were Jews in Rome to listen to Paul's preaching. This free diffusion of cultural elements made Roman civilization, in the main, a product of the cultures of the Near East, Greece, and Rome.

Thus the interaction of Eastern and Western cultures was a constant factor in the history of the Mediterranean lands, working in many ways: through migration, colonization, commercial intercourse, and conquest—first conquest of the East by the West, and later, conquest of the West by the East.

The trade relations and other contacts between East and West must have affected the economic practices of early European peoples in various ways that cannot be definitely traced by the historian. It was perhaps through trade that metal coins, now so important an item in our everyday life, were first introduced into Europe from western Asia Minor. There may have been forerunners of coinage in lands farther east, but in Anatolia people first realized the advantage of using metal globules of convenient size, stamped to guarantee their purity and weight. More definitely known is the far-reaching influence of some of the usages centering about agriculture, particularly in Mesopotamia, where huge estates were cultivated by slaves and tenant farmers who were obligated to make payments of a share of produce to the landholders. Because of the conservatism of the East these types of landholding persisted throughout the long period of ancient history; and when Rome came to occupy the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, she fell heir to Eastern usages and put them

into general practice. The origin of medieval serfdom cannot be studied without reference to this long tradition.

Finally, Western civilization got its religion from Asia—where all the great religions of the earth had their origin. Within one small area of the Near East three dominant religions arose: Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. It was the Hebrews who most profoundly affected the religious life of Western societies. The homeland of the Hebrews, now called Palestine, lay across the western horn of the Fertile Crescent. Into this land the Hebrews, originally desert herdsmen from Arabia, moved in a long succession of migrations covering some two centuries from about 1400 to 1200 B. C. In the beginning the religion of the Hebrews, Judaism, differed not at all from that of other Semitic peoples. The Hebrew tribal god was the nature god of the Semites. In the course of centuries, however, the long political struggle for the maintenance of Jewish freedom and cultural integrity led the prophets to condemn the worship of foreign gods as both symptomatic of, and responsible for, the weakness of Israel. They regarded the worship of other gods as traitorous to the God of the Hebrews and to his chosen people. Only He had power to save them. After years of misfortune and constant reiteration of this theme by the prophets, the character of the jealous, brutal, tribal god gradually changed, and finally a monotheism developed destined to affect the future religious life of the whole Western civilized world. Out of the Hebrew religion grew Christianity and Mohammedanism.

Of less importance in their effect on Christianity were certain beliefs of the Persians, some of which influenced Christianity through the Hebrews, who had taken them over from the Persian religion; others came direct and have influenced Christianity in all periods, particularly in the first few centuries of its existence. These beliefs, in general, center about the Persian emphasis on the sharp conflict between good and evil. The powers of darkness were represented as engaging in an eternal struggle with the powers of light. Those ideas have been woven into the fabric of the Christian religion.

No better illustration of cultural diffusion and historical continuity—principles which this book seeks to emphasize—can be found than early Hebrew literature, which, brought together in the Bible, has become so much a part of our own literature as to make us frequently forget its Eastern origin.

The importance of the transfusion of Eastern culture to the West becomes clear when we consider specific contributions. To begin with, it must not be forgotten that those inventions and discoveries that played so significant a role in the development of the historic civilizations of the Near East passed in time to the West and were likewise significant in the transition from the Neolithic cultures in Europe to advanced civilizations. We have already noticed how the art of writing passed from the East to Greece through the Phoenician town of Byblus. From Greece it appears to have been carried to Rome by Greek traders. The calendar, the division of the circle into 360 degrees, some of the weights and measures used in Europe, and some of the forms of architectural construction, like the barrel vault and the dome—all these were of Eastern origin. The wheel (first in the Mesopotamian region), the use of boats and ships, and the invention of the potter's wheel likewise trace back to the Near East. The art of using metals, particularly the use of copper and bronze, runs like a thread through ancient history. Copper was probably first used by the Egyptians about 5000 B. C. By 3000 B. C. it was being used in Crete, Greece, Sicily, Hungary, and Spain; and by 2500 B. C. in Middle Europe, France, North Germany, and Scandinavia. Bronze was probably in use in western Asia by 4000 B. C.; certainly in Egypt before 3000 B. C. Its use gradually diffused to southern, central, western, and northern Europe, reaching Scandinavia about 1900 B. C.

In other important particulars the ancient East contributed to European civilizations. The oriental type of absolutism, for example, with its peculiar tie-up between religion and political power had distinct influences on later Western governments. It directly affected Alexander, the great Macedonian conquerer, and his successors, the Hellenistic kings. The ruler cult which they developed passed on to the Roman Em-



pire, and in the time of the Roman emperor Diocletian, at the end of the third century A. D., Oriental absolutism in its full form was taken over by Rome. The crown of the later Roman Empire, representing the rays of the sun spreading from the emperor's head, is symbolic of his claim to be the Unconquerable Sun, a divinity commonly associated in the astrological literature of the Near East with supreme power. Through the Middle Ages the intimate bond between government and religion continued, and out of it developed modern theories about the divine right of kings.

### THE UNION OF EAST AND WEST

We have chosen the fourth century B. C., when Alexander the Great of Macedonia led his victorious armies over the whole of the Near East, as a convenient stopping point in the discussion of the ancient civilizations of the Near East. But, as already indicated, the Eastern civilizations did not come to an end with the Greek conquests, or later with the conquests of the Romans; nor, obviously, did the influence of East on West come to a close. In fact, when the Greeks and, later, the Romans extended their empires into the East, the conditions became most favorable for culture-diffusion. Then the relations of East and West became so intimately intertwined that the history of the Near East becomes definitely a part of the history of Europe. Later still, as we shall see, when the Mohammedan hosts moved from Arabia into the western Mediterranean world and into European territory, there set in another era of Eastern influences on Western civilization. Since then, in our own time, European imperialism has established new direct contacts with the Near East through conquest and colonization. When we turn in the next chapter to the rise of Greek civilization, we shall again be impressed with the debt that European civilization owes to the Near East.

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# TABLE I

## SOME HISTORICAL LANDMARKS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

### THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

**5000 B. C.**

Rise of Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations and close of the Neolithic period in these regions.

**2000 B. C.**

Rise of Assyrian civilization.

**1500 B. C.**

Rise of Phoenician civilization.

**1150 B. C.**

Rise of Hebrew civilization.

**550 B. C.**

Rise of the Persians.

**Fourth Century B. C.**

Alexander's conquest of the Near East and the establishment of his empire.

### ANCIENT GREECE

**3000 B. C. to 1100 B. C.**

Period of Aegean civilization.

**Second Millennium B. C.**

Conquest of the Aegean world by Aryan nomads and the decay of the Aegean civilization.

**Ninth Century B. C.**

The Homeric Age—emergence of the city-states.

**Eighth Century B. C.**

Development of commerce and colonial expansion, followed by rapid economic and social change.

**Fifth Century B. C.**

Invasion of Greece by the Persians and their defeat, followed by the great Age of Pericles.

**Fourth Century B. C.**

(1) Conquest of the Greek cities by Alexander, followed by the Hellenistic period; (2) Greek cities and Near East become parts of Alexander's Empire.

### ANCIENT ROME

**Second Millennium B. C.**

Aryan peoples move into the Italian peninsula.

**750 to 500 B. C.**

Period of Etruscan rule in Rome.

**500 B. C.**

(1) Expulsion of the Etruscan kings and the beginning of the Roman Republic; (2) beginning of the conquest of Italy and the period of imperial expansion.

TABLE I—*Continued*

THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

ANCIENT GREECE

ANCIENT ROME

**Second and First Centuries B. C.**  
Partial conquest of the Near East by the Romans.

**Second Century B. C.**  
(1) Macedonia and the Greek cities conquered by Rome; (2) Greece becomes part of the Roman Empire.

**First Century B. C.**  
Rome takes most of the Near East.

**Third and Second Centuries B. C.**  
Roman wars against Carthage carry Roman arms outside Italian soil and across the sea.

**Second Century B. C.**  
Roman conquest of Macedonia, the Greek cities, and parts of the Near East.

**First Century B. C.**  
(1) Further conquest of the Near East; (2) the overthrow of the Roman Republic; (3) establishment of imperial government under Augustus; (4) the Augustan Age.

**Second Century A. D.**  
Rome, at its greatest extent, includes all of the Near East.

**Fourth Century A. D.**  
(1) Constantinople becomes seat of imperial government in the East; (2) adoption of Christianity as state religion of Rome.

**Fifth Century A. D.**  
Fall of the Empire in the West and the beginning of the Middle Ages.

## GREEK CIVILIZATION

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**W**E HAVE ALREADY CAUGHT glimpses of the Greeks appearing now and then on the stage of Near Eastern history. Trade, migration, and finally conquest had drawn them into the orbit of Eastern affairs. But the great civilizations of the Near East were already old when the Greeks appeared upon the scene, for in the development of civilization the West lagged far behind the East. While Egypt and Mesopotamia were building high civilizations, Europe was still living in the later Stone Age. Among European peoples, the ancient Greeks were the first to enter the historical period; but we cannot pass directly to a study of Greek culture in Europe, because the story of its development does not begin in Greece proper. Forerunners of Greek culture have been found in the island of Crete, in western Asia Minor, and in the Aegean Islands, as well as in continental Greece. Because these areas in and about the Aegean developed a more or less homogeneous culture, it is usually designated as Aegean civilization. Chronologically and geographically, these regions might have been included in our study of the Near East; as forerunners of Greek civilization they offer a proper introduction to the Greek world.

Examination of a map of the eastern Mediterranean area will help to explain why an advanced civilization developed in and about the Aegean before it did in Europe, and why Greece



was the first of European lands to become civilized. In this area, Asia Minor thrusts the Oriental cultures farthest west, and the Greek peninsula extends southeastward to meet the Orient. Between the two, the comparatively small body of water called the Aegean was a connecting link, an ever-present invitation to trade and intercommunication between the peoples of the East and the peoples westward. Moreover, the Aegean is itself dotted by numerous islands which afforded easy stages in the westward movement of culture.

### **The Aegean civilization**

There were three important centers of Aegean civilization. Its chief focal point was the island of Crete off the southeastern coast of Greece. A second center was the region about the cities of Mycenae and Tiryns in the Argolid, on the mainland of Greece; the third was the city of Troy near the Dardanelles in Asia Minor. The civilization which grew up in these areas covers a period, roughly, from 3000 B. C. to the first centuries of the last millennium B. C. In this period we are in the twilight zone of Greek history; contemporary written records have either perished or have become incomprehensible. Yet in Greek literature there are references to this remote past which were based upon more or less reliable traditions, as recent excavations tend to prove.

In Crete the Neolithic Age came to an end and the Bronze Age began about 3000 B. C., somewhat earlier than on the mainland of Greece. Little is known about the origin of the Neolithic inhabitants, but the evidence of archaeology and place names suggests that either they or their Bronze Age successors were closely related to the people living on the western coast of Asia Minor. In either case, it is probable that with the advent of the Bronze Age a new people entered the Aegean world. Crete then became the center of a culture rivaling that of the Eastern peoples which we studied in the previous chapter. This culture we call Minoan, from Minos, who appears in Greek legends as a king of Crete. Excavations have revealed wealthy towns and large palaces, of which that at Knossos, the home of Minos, is most famous. Here,

according to tradition, was the labyrinth, the home of the Minotaur; and here the ruins of the palace, with its many rooms and courts, give a certain amount of credibility to the legend.

In the Aegean area the sea dominated the culture of the people. Through the maritime empire which the Cretans built—the first in history—the island was brought into contact with foreign lands and with the earlier cultures of the East. Much of the wealth of the island was due to maritime pursuits and to tribute collected from less powerful communities. Its naval strength was so great as to enable it to dispense with armies and fortifications.

Artistically the people who produced this civilization were highly developed, as excavations have shown. Their pottery, both in form and in decoration, was remarkable, and the octopuses, seaweed, and other forms of marine life depicted on it are a constant reminder of Cretan acquaintance with the sea. Paintings on palace walls give most lifelike representations of processions, public gatherings, and other phases of life; and objects made of gold, silver, bronze, and ivory show a perfection of technique in plastic and other arts equal to that of Egypt and Babylonia.

In Greece the development was much slower than in Crete during the prehistoric period, and when Bronze Age civilization there reached its zenith we find significant differences between it and Cretan culture. Toward the beginning of the second millennium B. C., bands of Aryan invaders began to seize strategic sites and to become masters of the country. During this millennium there were probably several waves of invasion, some of which extended eastward across the Aegean. About 1400, Knossos lost its position of primacy, and on the mainland of Greece, Mycenae, the home of Agamemnon, became the seat of a loosely knit empire. Hence we call the civilization of the mainland at this time Mycenaean. Mycenaean culture is known chiefly through excavations carried out at Mycenae and Tiryns in the latter part of the nineteenth century. At both these points pretentious palaces defended by massive fortifications have been uncovered. In the graves

of the ancient rulers was found a great wealth of gold ornaments, jewelry, and precious stones. Though the skill of the Mycenaeans was inferior in some respects to that of the Cretans, their pottery and work in metals display fine craftsmanship and artistic taste in a great variety of products.

The third nucleus of Aegean civilization centered about Troy, the Ilion of Homer's great epic. There excavations have revealed nine settlements, one after another having been built over the ruins of the one preceding. The oldest—that is, the deepest—of these cities goes back more than 5000 years to the earliest phase of the Bronze Age; the most recent belongs to the Roman period. The sixth and seventh settlements flourished during the great period of Mycenaean civilization, the seventh<sup>1</sup> being the city immortalized by Homer in his story of the siege of Troy by the Mycenaean hero Agamemnon.

After the destruction of Knossos there followed a long interval of great unrest in all the Near East, on both land and sea. Aryan invaders pressing into the Aegean area from north and west set people after people in motion. Many left their homes and migrated southward; Egyptian records preserve accounts of some of the most important migratory tribes and their attacks. When the movements of peoples were over, the Aegean civilization was destroyed; Troy had been sacked and burned by the Greek forces of Agamemnon; the Dorians, the last wave of Aryan invaders, had entered the Peloponnesus and had brought the Iron Age into Greece, approximately 1000 B. C.

The first centuries of the last millennium B. C. may be called the medieval period of Greek history, for the untutored invaders, like the Teutonic tribes who settled in the western Roman Empire, were unable to maintain the high standards of Minoan and Mycenaean art. Hence there was a decline which all but wiped out the glories of the past. Memory of this glory was perpetuated in classical times by picturesque

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<sup>1</sup>Recent excavations by the archaeologists of the University of Cincinnati prove that Homer's Troy was the seventh settlement, not the sixth, as previously supposed.



legends which ascribed the surviving monuments of past generations to an heroic people descended from the gods.

### **The geographic extent of the Greek world**

From its narrowly confined beginnings more than ten centuries before the Christian era, Greek culture spread over a considerable part of the Mediterranean area. To attempt to fix the geographic boundaries of the Greek world thus created would prove difficult and misleading, for to a Greek the word "Hellas" had a cultural rather than a geographic and political connotation. It embraced all districts to which the Hellenes (Greeks) carried their language and their customs. Thus its extent differed from century to century. That part of the Balkan peninsula which lies south of Macedonia, a land considered Greek by some writers, barbarian by others, was the first home of the Greek people. Here was its birthplace, for until the Aryan conquerors of the peninsula, speaking an Indo-European language, had intermarried with the native population, itself a mixture of a Neolithic people and a branch of the Mediterranean race, the Greek people of historical times did not exist.

During the age of migration toward the end of the second millennium B. C., the Greeks, as we have seen, seized the islands in their passage across the Aegean and occupied the western coast of Asia Minor. As wealth and commerce grew, and as social and political life changed, Hellas expanded still farther. Beginning in the eighth century B. C., colonies were dispatched, like swarms from a hive, to more fertile lands or to strategic points of commercial importance on the shores of many seas. Thus the Propontis, with its important fisheries, was transformed into a Greek lake, and the Bosphorus became the Greek gateway to the Euxine Sea. Here was founded Byzantium, the most important of all Hellenic settlements, the city later refounded and renamed by Constantine. Grain and other raw products from southern Russia attracted colonies to the north shore of the Euxine, and in time the whole sea was surrounded by a ring of Hellenic settlements. Meanwhile the coasts of Thrace and Macedonia, rich in precious metals and famed for

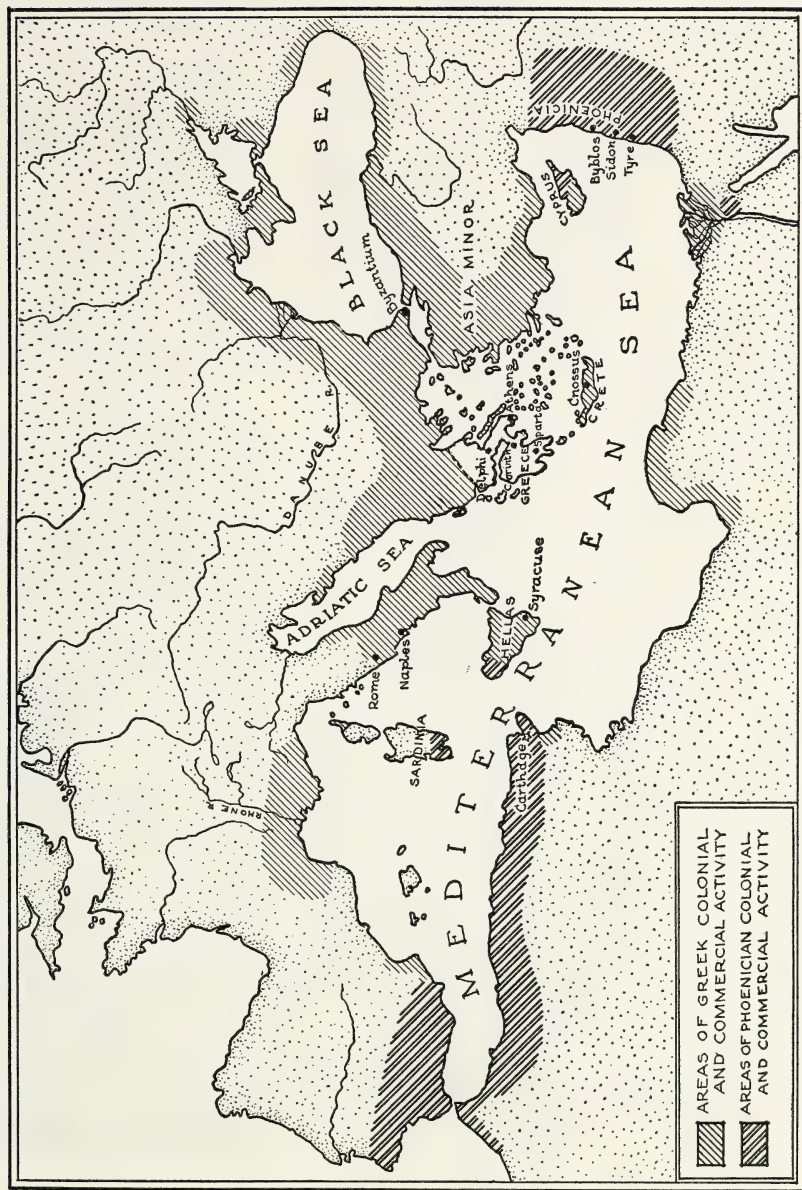
their vineyards, and the islands of the northern Aegean received their quota of colonies.

Nor was the Mediterranean littoral in the West neglected. Massilia, the modern Marseilles, one of the three greatest Mediterranean ports of today, shows how well sites for Greek colonies were chosen. Neapolis (Naples) and Cumae on the Bay of Naples mark their farthest advance northward in Italy, but south of this point the peninsula was known as Magna Graecia (Great Greece) because of the number, wealth, and culture of the Greek settlements. In Sicily, Greek colonies lined the shores, except at the western end, where Carthage maintained a foothold; and in the southern Adriatic, colonies on the islands and on both shores served as a bridge to Italy. In Africa there were few settlements of Greeks, for Phoenician competition was great; but even here Cyrene and Egypt offered shelter for limited numbers.

Thus Hellas in the classical period was widely scattered. Possessing no sort of political unity, it was held together mainly by the bonds of its common civilization. Community of religion, language, customs, and traditions was strong enough to preserve Greeks from losing their Hellenic heritage even though settled in the midst of barbarian peoples. We use the term "barbarian" here, as the Greeks used it, to denote men who had no share in Hellenic culture; only in so far as Greeks prided themselves on their achievements and regarded their civilization as superior to all others did they give to the word an invidious connotation.

#### **Geographic factors in Greek culture**

Greece itself is a poor land. Much of it is unsuitable for cultivation, and even the arable land is not particularly productive. The main crops were grain and vegetables until an agricultural revolution taught Greece how to secure a modest wealth from the cultivation of vines and olives. On the mountain slopes herds of sheep and goats were pastured to supply the people with meat and clothing; throughout history, shepherds have been an important element in the population of Greece. To the products of the cultivated land must be added



6. GREEK AND PHOENICIAN SPHERES OF COLONIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY TO THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

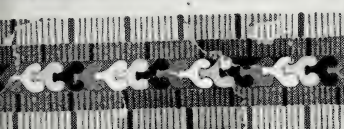


a supply of timber sufficient for fuel and building purposes, such as oak, walnut, beech, and evergreens; and an abundance of valuable building stone and beautiful marbles. Mineral resources were scanty, but all-important deposits of iron and copper were available, together with quantities of lead, silver, and gold. The poverty of resources in ancient Greece had its repercussions on Greek history, for as population grew it pressed increasingly hard on the food supply. It was this pressure in some areas that contributed to set in motion the colonial movements mentioned above and led government consciously to promote industry and trade and to provide navies to protect ships coming home with food supplies and other necessary products. Thus, for example, Athenian sea power developed.<sup>1</sup>

Geographic influences played a significant role in Greek political development. The land is divided by hills and mountains into many small valleys. In the valleys were situated the farms of the wealthy nobles and the more prosperous peasants. On the surrounding hills and mountains the poorer peasants eked out a precarious existence with their small unfertile plots, their herds, and their charcoal furnaces. Each of these valleys had its own political center, situated near an acropolis dominating the plain. These valleys and encircling mountains give the key to Greek political life, for they served to divide the country into communities economically and politically self-sufficing. When city life began, each valley had its city (*polis*), ready to defend its independence at all costs.

Political life in Greece, therefore, was city life, for there existed no common economic need sufficiently powerful to bring about coöperation between cities. Where the valley was broad and fertile, the state became large and powerful, as did Sparta from her long control of the valley of the Eurotas in Lacedaemon. Where the hills were low and easily crossed, there was a constant struggle between the forces of separation and union. Where a series of small valleys was cut off by a ring of high mountains, as in Attica, there was frequently a

<sup>1</sup>Alfred Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth* (fifth edition, Oxford, 1931), pp. 326-354.



Upper left: Fresco of the late Minoan Period (1350-1100 B. C.), found at Tiryns, Greece, showing two women in a chariot watching a boar hunt. Lower left: Fresco of a woman carrying a casket, showing the costume of the late Minoan Period. (These two scenes are water-color reproductions of the originals in the National Museum in Athens.) Center: Two views of a black-figured archaic Athenian oil jug (about 560 B. C.) The upper picture shows women working wool and the lower shows them weaving on a loom, the only picture known of a Greek loom actually in use. Upper right: Preparations for a wedding. Athenian red-figured pottery (430-420 B. C.). Lower right: Girl playing the double flute. Red-figured Athenian oil jug (about 480 B. C.). (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)



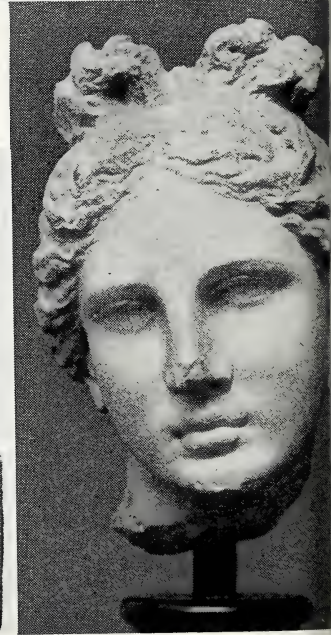


Above: Model of a section of the interior of the Parthenon as restored by Chipiez, showing the interior columns and the colossal gold and ivory statue of Athene, which was dedicated in the year 438 B. C. Much of the Parthenon, both inside and out, was brilliantly colored, and all of the sculpture was colored to give the figures a life-like appearance. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.) Opposite page, upper picture: Restoration by Thiersch of the Acropolis of Athens as it appeared in the time of Pericles. At the top of the hill is the Parthenon, the most perfect example of Doric architecture; at the extreme left is the Erechtheum, the finest example of Ionic architecture. The enormous statue is that of Athena Promachos, by Phidias, the greatest of all Greek sculptors, who supervised the building of the Parthenon and did the sculpture for it. (Courtesy of the New York Public Library.) Lower picture: Ruins of the amphitheater at Delphi.









Upper left: The *Winged Victory* of Samothrace, which celebrated the victory of the Greeks over the fleet of Ptolemy, king of Egypt, in 306 B. C. (Louvre, Paris.)  
 Upper right: *Young Priestess*, ascribed to Phidias. (Courtesy of the ENIT.)  
 Lower left: Bas-relief depicting the birth of Venus, the central section of the work known as the *Throne of Venus* (5th century B. C.). (Courtesy of the ENIT.)  
 Lower right: Head of Aphrodite (4th century B. C.). (Courtesy of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.)

city-state composed of several smaller units whose identity had been lost. Thus valleys and mountains created geographic units so fixed that time developed a local patriotism much more important than the national pride of the Greek people. The history of Greece is that of modern Europe in miniature, for the city-states, like modern nations, were always jealous of one another and ready to ally themselves with neighbors, either European or Asiatic, for the furtherance of their own selfish ends.

Scarcely less important than the influence of the mountains upon the Greeks was that of the sea, which served both to separate and to unite them. Hardly a district in Greece was without its seacoast and harbors. In the age of migrations, as we have seen, the Greeks occupied the Aegean islands and the western coast of Asia Minor. Their westward movement came later, when seamanship had improved, and when a characteristic Hellenic civilization had already taken form under the tuition of Anatolia. But wherever they went, the sea served as their road up to the time when Alexander's conquests opened to them the Persian Empire. Thus almost never do we find a Greek colony situated inland, or a Greek land empire. Greek colonies always remained isolated nuclei of Hellenism on the shores of barbarian lands. They were bound to the homeland largely by sentimental ties and by constant maritime intercourse. We must realize, however, that although the sea served as a means of preserving Greek language, customs, and religion in lands widely separated from Greece, it was not less influential in preventing political unity, for colonies had to rely mainly upon their own endeavors to hold the territory they had occupied. Each colony was an independent offshoot of the parent stock; it had its own magistrates and its own political organization. Thus the sea helped to perpetuate in alien lands that spirit of particularism which was so characteristic of Greek lands at home.

#### **Diffusion as a factor in Greek culture**

Something was said in the preceding chapter about the cultural contacts between the Greeks and Near Eastern peoples.



These contacts were historically significant, for both the Aegean civilization and the civilizations of the East played a part in the advance from the rude culture of the early Greeks to the high civilization of a later period. When the Aryan conquerors overran the Aegean world they had little appreciation of the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations, but they did not destroy them completely and were not wholly incapable of appreciating the utility of some of the elements of those civilizations. The influence of the Near East was much greater. "The Greeks were by no means pioneers of civilization. Their culture had its roots deep in the Orient. . . . Hellenic culture . . . owes a distinct debt in religion, science, economic life, art, and writing to Egypt, Babylonia, Phoenicia, Asia Minor, and Syria. History thus reveals no real break between the civilization of Greece and that of the Orient, but rather a constant and fruitful process of interpenetration."<sup>1</sup>

As we have noticed, the Greeks were advantageously situated for the influx of Eastern influences. Extensive trade with the interior of Asia Minor and countries farther east was facilitated by the valleys leading up from the Ionian coast. Contacts came through commercial settlements in Egypt, service in the armies of the Pharaohs, and competition with the Phoenicians. When the Greeks became a maritime people and turned from piracy to commerce, their business led them far afield. Their contact with Lydia was so close that it is now impossible to tell whether Ionian Greeks or Lydians invented coinage. In either case, all of the great commercial city-states of Greece, realizing its advantages, soon established mints of their own. The Greek cities nearest to the Orient, those of Ionia in Asia Minor, were far ahead of their continental cousins during the seventh and sixth centuries B. C. They were in constant contact with Anatolian Lydia until they were made subject to it, and then they passed over into the Persian Empire when (in 546 B. C.) Cyrus the Persian defeated Croesus, the last Lydian king. Many of the earliest

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<sup>1</sup>Albert A. Trever, *The Ancient Near East and Greece* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936), Vol. I, p. 141.

Greek poets came from the Anatolian coast or the adjacent islands; Thales, scientist and philosopher, and successive heads of early philosophic schools were Ionians, or could trace their descent to Ionia. In sculpture, the Ionian schools led the way; in engineering, the waterworks of Samos served as models for the aqueducts and fountains built for the Greek tyrants of Athens, Megara, and Corinth. One must not, however, exaggerate the part played by the East in stimulating Greek thought, for the earliest literary-historical work of the Greek people, the epic poetry of Homer, though undoubtedly written in Asia Minor, is characteristically Greek, almost untouched by the hybrid Greco-Anatolian civilization in which it came into being.

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF GREEK LIFE

A picture of Greek life in the ninth century B. C.—the Homeric Age—discloses a rude agricultural society. As in the Near East, so in Greece, the sustaining roots of society were in the soil. And although later developments carried the Greek communities forward from a primitive agricultural economy to a complex economy in which industry, commerce, and finance combined to meet the wants of the people, agriculture retained a dominant position. In the Homeric period every family had its allotment of land, and wealth was measured in flocks and herds. Such manual skills as were required to supply tools, clothing, and shelter were commonly found in the household rather than by resort to specialists in industry, while barter—and frequently plundering raids—supplemented the family resources. Socially, the Greek community was essentially aristocratic. Small isolated city-states had already emerged. At the head of each stood a king surrounded by the nobles who acted as advisers and served as a check on arbitrary rule. Below this small minority were the masses—peasants and shepherds, who passed almost unnoticed in the records of the period. Lowest of all, there come into the picture quotas of homeless vagabonds and a limited number of slaves, women more often than men, taken in raids and employed mainly in household duties.

During the eighth and seventh centuries B. C., Greek communities underwent significant changes in their economic activity and social groupings. The forces of change were set afoot by colonial and commercial expansion. Agriculture underwent a fundamental change. Colonial lands with soil more suited to the production of grains than that of the homeland began to supply the Greek markets. Landlords financially able to make the change from the growing of cereals to the cultivation of vines and olives grew in wealth, while the poorer peasant soon found himself involved in hopeless debt, and finally surrendered his land. At the same time other agricultural practices in Greece were being influenced by practices in the colonies, where large estates cultivated by serfs were becoming common. Such changes were transforming Greece from a land of small proprietors of little or moderate wealth into a land of large estates, changes emphasizing the contrast between wealthy landlords and ruined landless men who had once tilled their own acres.

Just as striking were the economic and social changes brought about in the urban centers, where industry, commerce, and finance were advancing to a position of importance unknown in earlier Greek society. The opening of colonial and foreign markets stimulated commerce, the increasing demands of which could be supplied only by the expansion of industry. The usual results followed: occupations multiplied, and industrial specialization with a division of labor became a characteristic feature of Greek economy. These activities, both commercial and industrial, were further facilitated by the introduction of coinage in Greece in the seventh century B. C. Running parallel with these events, particularly in those cities best favored for the new developments, came marked changes in social grouping. Two new classes, merchants and artisans, emerged for the first time to take their place alongside the older agricultural groups, and soon rose to a position of wealth and influence. The social compound was further affected in certain areas by increasing additions of alien workers and slaves made necessary by the economic transformation. Slaves now became an important factor in Greek economy as



cultivators on the agricultural estates and workers in the mines and in industry. The slave trade became active and extensive; new sources of supply were the native populations of the colonies and captives taken in wars. An estimate of the population of Attica for the year 431 B. C. gives the number of adult males as 119,000. Of these 40,000 were citizens, 24,000 were alien residents, and 55,000 were slaves.<sup>1</sup>

The picture of Greek society suggested by the foregoing paragraphs presents a striking contrast between the Homeric Age and the period of the sixth and fifth centuries B. C. Greek society had become increasingly complex, social groups with conflicting interests were emerging, wealth was greatly increased. It was the increased wealth that furnished the necessary economic foundation for the splendid cultural achievements of the fifth century, when Greek civilization reached its highest point. At the same time inequalities in the distribution of wealth became evident and introduced a disturbing factor into Greek life, particularly in its political aspects.

### GREEK POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

The decisive influence of the geographic environment on the political development of Greece has been pointed out. There was no national Greek state. In its place there were many cities, each of which with its environs formed a politically self-contained unit, like the national state of the present day. In the earliest times there had been scores of these city-states; as time passed a number of the more powerful cities conquered and absorbed weaker cities within certain geographical areas and made themselves leaders. Thus Attica was absorbed by Athens; Argos, by the city of Argos; Lacedaemon and Messenia, by Sparta; part of Boeotia, by Thebes. But however

<sup>1</sup>Alfred Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*, p. 415. The Greeks accepted slavery as they accepted any other institution. It had existed to some extent from the earliest times, and no concept of moral wrong was associated with the practice. Although good treatment was not universal, Zimmern tells us that in Athens slaves "were so well treated, had become so integral a part of the life of the city, that they were indistinguishable from the citizens." The reason for good treatment Zimmern finds in the Athenians' appreciation of the great importance of the slaves to the material well-being of the community. For an illuminating treatment of this subject see Zimmern, pp. 384 ff.

large or however small these states were, they remained city-states. The study of Greek politics resolves itself, therefore, into a consideration of the evolution of the city-state.

Greek political society was dynamic; its character changed with each generation as political privileges and control were placed on broader and broader foundations. Thus the Greeks normally progressed from monarchy to aristocracy, and then, if conditions were favorable, they advanced to democracy. Though this was the general trend of political development in Hellas, local factors and local needs produced a great diversity of governments. The constitutions of Athens and Sparta, for example, were dissimilar, not only from each other, but, in certain respects at least, from the constitutions of most Greek city-states. In Athens democratic government was more advanced and more stable than was usual in Greece. In Sparta, however, conservative tendencies prevailed to such an extent that its government retained many features which disappeared in other parts of Hellas. It, too, was stable.

#### **Relation of military defense to political privilege**

In a land of rival and often hostile city-states, military protection became an outstanding need in each community. It consequently influenced political development. The city-state of Sparta offers an excellent illustration. Sparta's conquests had made her more powerful than the majority of her neighbors. The inhabitants of the conquered districts comprised state serfs who worked the land for their Spartan lords, and merchants and artisans who lived in the towns. Although these townspeople were free, and although they possessed a certain amount of self-government in their local municipalities, they were subjects, not citizens, of the Spartan state. Political rights were limited exclusively to men of Spartan birth whose training and daily life conformed to rules and regulations made by the government. Preservation of the state was the chief end of government; consequently, military service came to be the citizen's sole profession. Sparta's army, therefore, was a professional organization, made up of all able-bodied citizens of military age. Sparta's wealth in land and

state serfs made this system possible, for it relieved individual Spartan citizens from the necessity of earning their own living. Their life tended to be communistic.

Such a system of military communism expresses in an exaggerated form a fundamental ideal of Greek political life, for the Greeks held in theory that every citizen should be ready to sacrifice himself and his personal interests for the welfare of the state—in other words, that individuals should be subordinate to the community in which they live. In most Greek states complete subordination was difficult of realization. In Sparta, however, local needs and conditions were responsible for the establishment of the regime described in the preceding paragraph; once this regime was established, the need of maintaining strict discipline over a numerically superior subject population served to crystallize and perpetuate a system originally designed to give Sparta military supremacy over her neighbors. The result was an iron discipline for the ruling class, as well as for the subject peoples.

Elsewhere in Greece, although individualism had an opportunity to develop by slow degrees, military needs played a part in constitutional and social development. In the days of Homer, kings were leaders in battle, judges, and priests. The wealthy nobles, who alone were able to supply themselves with expensive armor, horses, and chariots, formed a warrior class. In the course of time, since military and political power tended to be inseparable, this class became sufficiently powerful to restrict the authority of the monarch. His tenure of office was limited; new magistracies were created to take over first one and then another of his functions; and his advisory council, of which the nobles alone were members, gradually assumed control of the administration. In this fashion Homeric monarchy finally gave place to aristocracy.

The next development was stimulated by the military reforms of Sparta. Armies became larger and new tactics were introduced. Heavy-armed foot-soldiers took the place once occupied by the cavalry and became the first line of defense for the city-state. Sparta was sufficiently wealthy to support a permanent force of this type; but neighboring cities, lacking



the resources of Sparta and threatened by her rapid territorial advance in the Peloponnesus, called into military service all able-bodied men who could afford to provide themselves with heavy armor. Out of this "competition in armaments" came new political privileges for the wealthier peasants. Since the state depended upon them for its protection, it was forced to grant them political rights commensurate with their services. The aristocracy thus began to broaden into democracy. This kind of government is sometimes called *timocracy*, for the wealth of citizens determined their military obligations and political rights. The poorer peasants—the shepherds and charcoal burners of the highlands, and the sailors and fishermen of the coast—since they could not afford a suit of heavy armor, were not regarded as equally privileged with their more prosperous neighbors.

#### ✓ Economic forces and political change

Social and economic changes following Greek colonization and commercial expansion have already been described. Such changes were bound to affect political developments. They did, in fact, bring the next advance toward democracy. Merchants and artisans enriched by the new wealth emerged as a new and powerful element in Greek society. Excluded as they were from participation in government, they began to press for recognition. At the same time, the revolution in agricultural methods, which brought ruin to the small farmers while it greatly enhanced the wealth of the landlords, swelled the ranks of discontent. After a time, when long-continued possession of power had made the aristocratic leaders selfish in the exercise of their privileges, the discontented began to question long-established customs. Factions developed and the old agricultural nobility was forced to fight for control against leaders representing the unenfranchised elements in the state. In many cities where commerce and manufacturing were not highly developed, the nobles were victorious. In others, the new forces, making use of rivalries between aristocratic clans, gained the upper hand.

The first step toward real democracy was Greek *tyranny*, a

curious political phenomenon somewhat resembling the rule of the Medici in Renaissance Florence and the power of "bosses" in our American cities. Though the rule of the *tyrants* was unconstitutional, and though their treatment of the nobility who opposed them was necessarily brutal, still they brought many benefits to their communities. In the first place, they broadened the basis of political life to suit the needs of the new age, and they weakened the hold of the aristocrats upon the organs of government. In Athens, for example, they created a broader Athenian patriotism by the introduction of festivals in honor of Athena, a celebration symbolizing the union of all classes of Athenian citizens. On the Acropolis was centered the worship of Dionysus, god of wine, a divinity in which rich and poor had an equal interest. In this way official cults of great magnificence were established, cults in which the spirit of the Athenian people was destined to find expression. In ways like these the cults in which the nobles had an hereditary monopoly were overshadowed, and the power of the nobles in religious affairs was curtailed.

Tyranny helped to give the Greek world a new sense of values. The common man found his place in society, and under the tyrants he gained some idea of government. He was prepared in some measure for the broader democracy which normally followed the fall of tyranny. In Athens the movement was accelerated in the fifth century B. C. by the growth of maritime power, for this gave to the poorest citizens a place of importance in the defense of Athenian interests. They served as rowers in the fleet, and as an essential part in the Athenian military system they obtained equality in most of the work of government. Thus political rights became coextensive with the free native population of the city-state. In Athens, at times, even Greeks from other cities were freely admitted to citizenship; and some of the fifth-century statesmen traced their descent to non-Athenians. But ordinarily, Greek city-states were unwilling to admit to political rights Greeks from other towns; and conversely, a Greek exiled from his native city felt himself an alien even among fellow-Greeks. Such was the pride of the Greek in his city.

**Greek democracy and its problems**

Since most Greek cities were small, the citizen body was limited. Thus the democracy of such a state was quite different from the so-called democratic governments of today. The whole voting population of a community could meet together for the election of officials and for the transaction of public business. The citizens knew one another, if not personally, at least by reputation; and when wars arose they had a better opportunity to know why they were fighting, and whether the cause was worth fighting for. Athens, however, since it was larger than the ordinary city-states, had to combine representative government with its primary assembly. So the Athenian *Boule* (Senate), composed of members representing the various local divisions of Attica, became the chief organ of government.

As a state became larger and its citizens grew more numerous, economic interests became more diverse and politics more complicated. Under these conditions democratic government tended to lose its efficiency; for individuals were too ready to neglect public business when they felt that it concerned them only indirectly, or they tried to exploit the state when a conflict between classes arose. Thus as urban life in Athens and its commercial suburb, the Piraeus, developed, a breach was created between the country and the city which resulted in conflicts between them. In the end, numerical superiority brought victory to the urban element.

So instead of being governed by the whole citizen body for the good of all, Athens came to possess a perverted form of democracy in which the masses (*demos*) ruled the state for their own class interests, exploiting the wealthy in the process. Interest was transferred from the welfare of the state to the welfare of individual citizens; and in the fourth century, Demosthenes, the great Athenian orator, charged his fellow citizens with political indifference, absorption in private affairs, desire to make money, and unwillingness to serve in the Athenian army. These characteristics marked the decline of democratic government. Individualism and specialization had

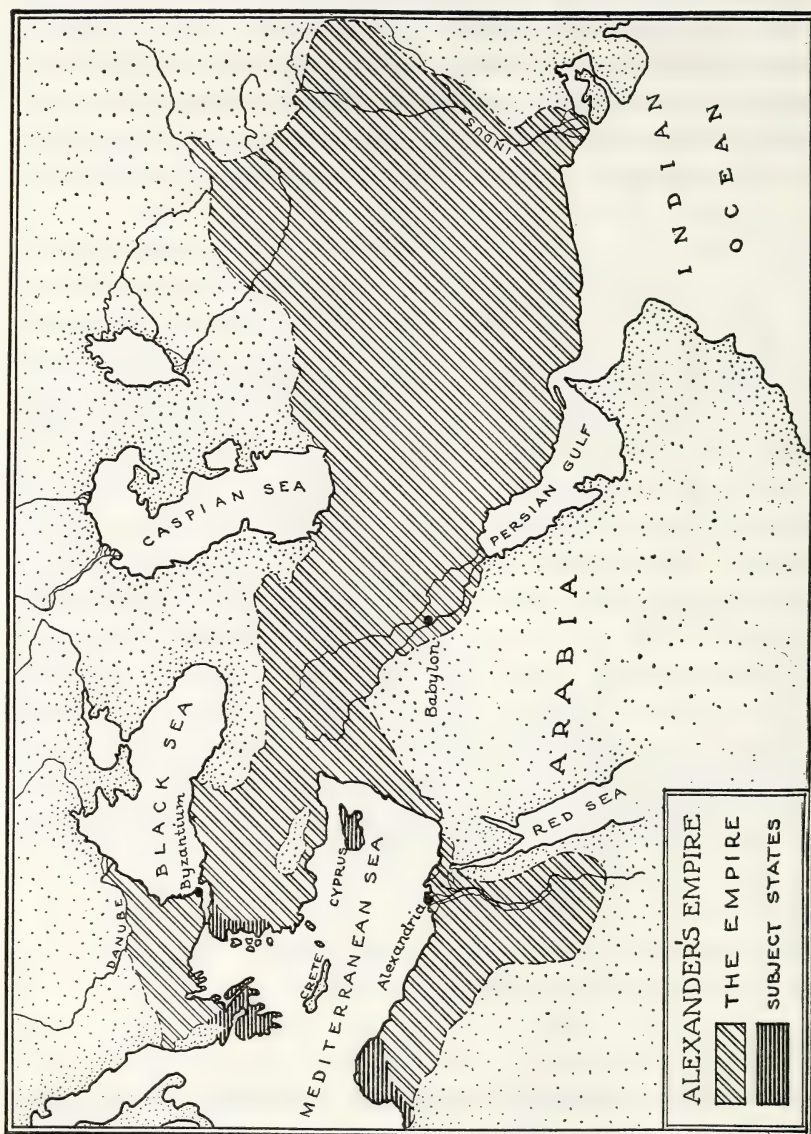


been victorious. When we contrast the age of Pericles with the age of Demosthenes, we see the difference: Sophocles, the dramatist of Periclean Athens, was a citizen first, general and treasurer of the state; Socrates, the great philosopher, served in the Athenian army. The fourth century, however, saw teachers and literary men aloof from affairs of state. Professional politicians ran the government, and professional soldiers commanded armies made up of soldiers of fortune like the French Foreign Legion, men who were actuated by no motives of patriotism. The wealthy citizens paid the bills. Thus politics had degenerated into exploitation of the wealthy by professional politicians for themselves and for the masses who held the balance of power.

In other city-states of Greece the problem of reconciling social groups, rich and poor, urban and agricultural, was even more acute than in Athens, where democracy had become firmly entrenched during the fifth century. Failure to effect an understanding between classes produced conflicts between aristocrats and democrats. When democrats were in power, they exiled the wealthy and confiscated their estates. The exiles then sought assistance in some neighboring state, and when they returned to power it was the turn of the democrats to leave the city. Greece was filled with exiles, inciting city to war against city, and class against class. These internecine wars were therefore one of the greatest problems Greece had to face and one of the most serious evils in the city-state form of government.

### **Attempts at political union**

Although the city-state ideal is dominant in Greek political practice, the evils of particularism brought thinkers to a realization that only through union could Greece avoid constant warfare among the city-states, prevent the immense destruction of life and property which resulted from interminable invasions, and ward off the danger of subjection to foreign powers. From time to time unions of city-states were created to meet definite crises, or to serve definite needs. The military power of Sparta in the sixth century placed the Spartans



8. ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE

to conceive of a broader foundation for government than that of the city-state. Both Plato and Aristotle considered the problem of government from the standpoint of the polis (city-state)—Plato in his *Republic*, the most famous of Greek Utopias, and Aristotle in his *Politics*. Their ideal state was a city with sufficient territory around it to make it self-sufficing, with inhabitants enough to defend it against aggression, yet small enough to avoid the disadvantages which come from large communities. Plato, however, like his master, Socrates, perceived the faults of democracy. At the same time he saw the stability of Sparta, a stability produced by keeping each class in its place and by entrusting the work of government to those who by special education and by profession were trained for the work. Thus the ideal government depicted by Plato in his *Republic* was aristocratic, the rule of the best, namely, those who were fitted by intellect and long training to dispense justice. The ordinary man, suited only for labor on the farms or in the shops, would be unable to upset the smooth working of this machine; and security would be assured by specially trained guardians of the state. Each man would then do the work for which he was best adapted. In Plato's opinion this was the essence of justice.

When the political vitality of the city-states disappeared under the weight of Alexander's conquests and a new kind of political world appeared, the change had its influence upon political theory. Philosophers began to reëxamine political thought by way of adjusting themselves to the changed conditions. They discussed such problems as the nature of kingship, the source and character of law, and the brotherhood of man; among them, one school, the Stoics, held that there was a universal law of nature, superior to the laws and customs of petty cities and kingdoms. According to this natural law all men were equal, Greeks and barbarians, slaves and freemen. So culture, becoming international and cosmopolitan, developed an outlook upon life destined to affect men's thoughts for centuries to come.

As political theorists, the Greeks have been the teachers of mankind. The records of their many experiments have pro-



vided material for political thinkers from that day to this. Our names for the different types of government—monarchy, aristocracy, tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy—are all Greek; and the definitions which we give these terms are taken from Aristotle. To American students, two of the attempts to unify the city-states in Hellenistic times, the Achaean and Aetolian leagues, are of special interest, for they offered numerous object lessons in federal government to the authors of our Constitution. Those who advocated the formation of a closely knit federal union constantly emphasized the fact that the weaknesses and failures of these Greek leagues were identical with those which characterized our government after the Revolution, under the Articles of Confederation. Fundamentally, conditions were the same. The rivalries and jealousies harbored by the sovereign American states toward one another were like those which prevented united action among the Greek city-states. In Greece, tradition and long-established customs operated to preserve the so-called sovereign rights of city-states, even when joined in federal unions, thereby preventing effective coöperation in peace and paralyzing the leagues in time of war. In America, the doctrine of state sovereignty produced similar results. Thus, profiting from American experience supplemented by lessons which these Greek experiments taught, the fathers of our Constitution gave to the federal government increased authority, including the power to tax and the power to raise and maintain armies.

### GREEK RELIGION

Before the time of Homer, Greek religion was strongly influenced by animism. The Greek shared a world inhabited not only by gods but by less personal spirits, good and evil, whose favor he sought by gift offerings and rude ceremonies. When we come down to the simple pastoral and agricultural society of the Homeric Age, we find a fully developed polytheism and mythology. In his writings Homer represents the gods as immortal beings, behaving very much like human beings but possessing superhuman powers. Their life on

Mount Olympus under the overlordship of Zeus was a representation of an imaginary patriarchal society. Though Zeus was lord and master, the gods were frequently unruly and insubordinate. Without going into a discussion of the origin and functions of the various divinities, we can see that Zeus, wielding his thunderbolts and living upon the highest mountain-top in Greece, was the Aryan god of the sky. So too we can recognize in Aphrodite and other female divinities the goddess of fertility who had been held in reverence by the non-Aryan, Bronze-Age inhabitants of Greece and Crete. Greek religion was, then, a fusion of native and partially alien elements.

Homer's picture, however, is an artistic generalization from which the detail has disappeared. It was open to serious criticism in a later age when the reflections of Greek philosophers emphasized, from a changed point of view, the immorality in the conduct of Homer's gods. The religion of the historic Greeks was chiefly local and civic. It is true that there were national centers, such as Olympia, where Greeks came to honor Zeus at the Olympic games, and Delphi, the seat of Apollo's oracle; but in the main, Athena, who was the patron goddess of Athens, was a different concept from the Athena of a rival city like Sparta.

Since religion was civic, worship tended to be formal, for it was the duty of the state to see that its gods were properly honored. Temples were erected by the state, not as places of congregational worship, but to house cult statues and to provide storerooms for sacred treasures. Sacrifices were state functions over which state officials presided. Though the people shared in the feasts which accompanied the sacrifices, either gratuitously or by the payment of a fee, still there was little personal religion in this form of worship. It did embody a vague notion of a future life, but the picture it presented of the afterworld was a picture of a shadowy existence in a dismal and forbidding realm.

Side by side with the state religion, there grew up a form of worship in which Greek individualism found expression. This worship centered at Eleusis in Attica, where Demeter and Persephone, goddesses of agriculture, had an ancient shrine.

With them was associated Dionysus, god of wine, a divinity increasingly popular after the extension of viticulture in the eighth and seventh centuries B. C. At Eleusis, only the initiated could participate in the sacred mysteries, and here a large hall was constructed for their meetings. In these mystery religions emphasis was laid upon right living, purification from sin, and the future life. It was the more attractive promise of a future life and the deeper significance attached to immortality that contributed to the popularity of the mystery cults, particularly for those who came to find earthly existence a painful experience.

For centuries the old religious beliefs were closely intertwined with all phases of Greek life and exerted a powerful influence over the Greek mind. It was only when philosophy emerged to call into question many of the religious traditions that they began to lose their hold.

### INTELLECTUAL LIFE AND ART

To those who have come to regard Athens as the center of Greek intellectual life, it is at first surprising to learn that Ionia, across the Aegean, and Italy were the homes of Greek philosophy, science, art, and literature before Greece itself. One reason for this was the poverty of Greece. The Ionian and the Italian settlements possessed greater wealth, owing to the fertility of their soil, to manufacturing, and to commerce; the leisure thus made possible served as an incentive to the development of ideas. The mere fact of settlement in new lands and contacts with new environments and new peoples helped to break down conservatism and to stimulate imagination.

Greece itself was not slow to imitate its Ionian and Italian cousins, especially after the Greek victories over the Persian invaders in the fifth century B. C. had stimulated Athenian pride and energies. From a backward, conservative town Athens soon became a vigorous intellectual center; and in the century and a half which followed, was the school of Hellas and the center of thought. It is true that many of the teachers, of whom Aristotle was preëminent, came to Athens from outlying regions of the Hellenic world, but even Aristotle



was the product of an Athenian school, for his teacher was Plato, a pure Athenian by birth and training. Henceforth Athens was destined to bulk large in Greek history, with the result that modern histories of Greece are filled with the achievements of Athenians.

During the Hellenistic period Athens continued to be the philosophical center of the Greek world; but the wealth and patronage of the Hellenistic monarchs tended to create rival centers of learning, and artists of all sorts flocked to the monarchs who wished to glorify themselves by erecting statues and magnificent buildings for the adornment of their cities, and to patronize laudatory poets and historians. Thus in their capital, Alexandria, the Egyptian kings founded a magnificent library wherein was collected all extant Greek literature. Its well-paid librarians were alike authors and professional scholars engaged in editing ancient texts. Scientific studies also flourished under the patronage of monarchs.

### **Greek philosophy**

Greek philosophy had its beginnings when thinkers first arose to question the basis of old customs and myths. In Homeric times and for a long period thereafter customs and myths played an important role in the political, economic, moral, and religious life of the Greeks, who in their behavior were governed by memory and emotional congeniality rather than by thought. How it came about that reason and common sense undermined custom and myth is the story of the beginning of Greek philosophy. The change came about slowly; for the myths and the beliefs which rested upon them, built up largely out of the imagination, had the powerful support of social prestige and traditional authority. In the end, reason found a place in Greek life because the early cultural environment congenial to custom and myth steadily changed and disappeared. The factors in that environmental change have already been noticed: the breaking down of isolation among Greek communities, the development of industry and commerce and the planting of colonies, the growth of wealth, the extension of slave labor. These events meant new stimulating con-

tacts and increased leisure to devote to intellectual speculation. The growth of practical knowledge incidental to the introduction of arts and crafts and commerce, the influx of new ideas from the more advanced cultures of the Near East—such influences made thinkers aware of the conflict between custom and myth on the one side and new ideas on the other. The conflict stimulated a healthy skepticism and a desire to seek out truth. By the time this great intellectual impulse had run its course the Greeks had created a splendid body of philosophy that has given them an enduring place in the history of Western civilization.

As already mentioned, the beginnings of Greek philosophy are found in Greek lands outside of Greece proper. During the early period philosophical speculation concerned itself mainly with the nature of the physical universe and the natural processes by which it came into being. Philosophers ceased to recite myths. They refused to accept explanations of things by reference to the supernatural powers of the gods. They reasoned that what is real can be understood, is comprehensible. They sought to explain things by rational processes directed toward the discovery and formulation of laws and principles. Thus they tried to reduce the unknown to a comprehensible system from which all mysticism should be eliminated. Into the speculations of the individual philosophers we cannot go, but it is of interest to know that this early philosophy made a number of fundamental distinctions upon which modern science has in part been built. From their speculations came the idea of perpetual change in the physical universe, as opposed to the early Greek notion of a fixed and stationary world; a theory of the character of material substances, known as the atomic theory; a theory of the development of living things, which some students regard as an anticipation of the modern theory of evolution.

By the fifth century B. C. the emphasis in philosophy had shifted from the physical world and natural science to an interest in human science—in humanity. Some of the Greek communities had now developed into city-states, and the changing needs of a more complex town life led thinkers to a con-

templation of man himself. Men tried to come to know man, to understand his significance and the significance of human institutions. Hence this period presents rich records of the inner life of the Greeks.

In town society the old religious traditions were slowly breaking down, and men were coming to understand that their institutions were not of divine origin, but man-made for man's purposes. The novel problems of city-state life demanded a new type of education in politics and statesmanship. In response to this demand there arose a body of teachers known as Sophists who instructed young men in grammar, composition, debating, and politics. Socrates and Plato gave the Sophists an evil reputation, charging that they taught only for money and were therefore more interested in pleasing their pupils than they were in the search for truth. They did not corrupt the youth, but they did lay emphasis on the practical goal; men were to be taught how to succeed; knowledge was desirable only for its practical value. In the pursuit of success each must be the judge of what is true; no external standards of what is right were to be recognized. These teachings emphasized individualism and an egocentric point of view. Not all of the Sophists deserved Plato's censure; some of them made a few lasting contributions to philosophy. But, beginning with good intentions, they permitted the keen competition for pupils to degrade their instruction into the teaching of any sort of specious argument to win, so that their ill repute is still preserved in the word *sophistry*.

Socrates (469-399 B. C.) was a native Athenian, known to us only through the writings of others. Plato represents him as the incarnation of the spirit of inquiry. He was interested in the social and moral aspects of citizenship and its problems. He believed that the mind has latent powers, that it can bring forth ideas and solve human problems. But men are mentally sluggish and need to be stirred. His was to be a mission of stirring men to think. He believed knowledge to be the basis of right behavior; ignorance the source of evil. He thought free discussion a valuable method of getting at truth and rational principles of conduct. So he made discussion his busi-



ness; he poured himself out generously to the people on the street, in the market place, and in the homes. In directing conversation he sought to lead individuals to understand the true basis of their beliefs and opinions and to draw them from a consideration of the private desires and feelings which tend to separate men to the general and rational principles which tend to unite them. He engaged one person after another in the give and take of conversation, elicited his ideas, and drew from him a more adequate defining of his concepts. By this so-called Socratic method he attempted to inculcate in men general principles as a basis for more rational thinking and more social behavior.

It will be recalled that the fourth century marked a troublous period for Athens, when democracy degenerated into a disastrous class struggle for political power and selfish material advantages.<sup>1</sup> Questions concerning forms of government and moral aspects of citizenship were pressing. Both Plato and Aristotle lived and wrote during this period of strain and stress, and with them ethics and political science reached a high point of development.

Reference has already been made to the importance of Plato and Aristotle in the history of political theory. In his *Republic* Plato (427-347 B. C.) worked out his plan for the ideal state. His approach to the problem was an ethical approach, a search for justice. He asked: What is the form or character of a state that will produce the good individual? He held that the character of the state reacts upon the individual and makes him just or unjust. Bad government, he believed, was responsible for the evil state of affairs in Athens in his own day. Thus Plato saw in the state the possibilities of a positive influence in the making of good citizens through state-directed education. The state was set up for the greatest happiness of the whole; it was not to be utilized for the glorification or the self-aggrandizement of the individual; the individual should be completely subordinated to the interests of the state. Government could achieve such aims only through the exercise of justice. In *The Republic* Plato presents his ideal. It was to

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 206-207.

be a state based on a frank recognition of individual differences and capacities. The wisest (the philosophers in the broad sense) were to do the ruling, the men of spirit and courage were to be the soldiers, the laborers should meet the economic needs of society. Each individual was to find his niche in the community by examinations given in connection with an extensive program of education for all citizens, in so far as they were capable of taking it on. The aim was to develop each intellectually and morally, as a means of civilizing and harmonizing classes. With the three classes—rulers, soldiers, and laborers—performing their separate functions harmoniously, the result would be justice in the state. Once this ideal form of government was established, Plato believed that it might go on perpetually without change, working for the good of the community.

Aristotle, like Socrates and Plato, held that the state is a necessary form of society for the development of its citizens. To the science of politics he ascribed an important place in human culture, inasmuch as government assigns to each class in society the kind and extent of the education befitting to each, and through its trained legislators directs much of the activity of each class. Thus, in the social order he contemplated an education regulated by law and yet liberal, so as to make "free men"; happiness should be the chief ethical end, the ideal which citizens enjoying citizenship should contemplate and endeavor to attain; this attainment, however, was impossible for the slave since he could not act freely within the state. In education he attached importance to art, because artistic appreciation contributes to the expansion of any personality participating in it.

Aristotle's mind ranged over all fields of learning. He wrote on politics, ethics, rhetoric, poetics, natural history, botany, physics, psychology, metaphysics, and logic. In each field he sought to find the basic underlying principle. He was the great systematizer of ancient learning. In his system of formal logic his purpose was to present the rules and principles by which one might acquire knowledge. It was his syllogistic method which later so enthralled the minds of the scholastics

of the Middle Ages. Today it has been greatly limited in its use by the modern inductive method and by what are known as instrumental logic and symbolic logic.

The philosophers so far mentioned lived and worked before the death of Alexander the Great. The political changes introduced into Greek life by his conquests are reflected in the philosophy of the Hellenistic period. One consequence of the breaking up of the Greek city-states was that the Greek citizen was deprived of the support and interest which had given meaning to his life: the participation in public affairs, which had meant so much to him, was now swept away; and he could find no substitute under the absolutisms set up by Alexander or under the later Roman rule. Consequently men gave themselves up to such contemplation as would make life the less empty and irksome, and philosophy took on a pessimistic attitude toward life and sought repose and solace. With no hope of recovering the old life, man centered attention on the inner life of his own consciousness; and his philosophical interests turned to ethics and ultimately to religion. The question he raised was: How might I escape an evil world and make life more tolerable? Among others, two schools of philosophers arose to answer this question: one was the Epicurean; the other, the Stoic.

Epicureanism laid the whole emphasis on ethics, on conduct, on conduct best calculated to secure pleasure or the absence of pain. This objective was to be realized by devotion to the simple life and by withdrawal from all public activity. Pleasure, the Epicureans argued, comes from satisfying the appetites; inability to satisfy the appetites brings pain. Therefore it is wise to practice such simplicity of life as to have no wants that cannot be satisfied. One should avoid setting his heart on unattainable things. They did not advocate the sensual life; they disdained the pleasures of the body because these did not last and because they brought too much pain in their wake. They regarded fear as one of the chief obstacles to a pleasant peace of mind and sought to banish it from men's thoughts. The masses still feared the power of the gods as manifested in thunder, lightning, plagues, and disease. The Epicureans



argued that the gods, like men and things, were made up of atoms, empty space, and motion; were no more powerful than men and so should not be feared. By a similar line of reasoning they attempted to free men from the fear of death and of life after death. When a man dies, the atoms composing his physical frame and his consciousness are scattered. Hence there is nothing fearful in death. Death is like a dreamless sleep. Later this philosophy was very attractive to the world-weary Romans, and it was in the poem, *Of the Nature of Things*, by a Roman poet, Lucretius, that it attained its grandest expression.

Stoicism, like Epicureanism, sought to find a satisfactory way of life amid the uncongenial environment of the time. To the Stoic the satisfactory life consists largely in getting rid of passions and emotions which upset the harmony that should exist between man and divine reason that rules the world. Reason should determine values and dictate conduct. Man must rise above external circumstances; material riches and worldly honors have no value and have no relation to human contentment. The Stoic defied the world; pain and misfortune are inescapable and are to be borne with calm resignation. Outward conditions do not count. All that matters is the inner response to them, and that can be controlled.<sup>1</sup> So Epicetetus, the Roman slave, did not mind being a slave; and a Roman emperor and Stoic, Marcus Aurelius, said that life could be bearable even in a palace.

Mention has already been made of the political theories and the concepts of law developed by the Stoics as a reaction to the changes brought about by Alexander's conquests.<sup>2</sup> Since loyalty to city-states was dying out, it was fitting that a higher loyalty to mankind should take its place. In this atmosphere a belief in the common brotherhood of man developed. Stoicism had an important effect upon early Christian doctrine; the writings of St. Paul are permeated with Stoic turns of expression and ways of thought. No less important was the

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<sup>1</sup>In this brief statement no mention is made of *will* to which the Stoics gave an important place in their moral judgments.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 211.

influence of Stoicism upon thoughtful Romans, particularly in the first centuries of the Christian Era.

### Greek science

The Epicureans laid emphasis on natural laws and denied the intervention of personal gods in the affairs of human life. Their attitude represents the critical skepticism of the Hellenistic Age, and their search for physical explanations of man's experiences was one eminently suited to an age hardly less materialistic than our own. This was an age of science. Mathematics flourished; at this time Euclid standardized the study of geometry in a work which was used for many centuries by all students of the subject, and which still serves as the basis for our textbooks. Astronomy made rapid advances: the earth's shape and size were computed, its relation to the sun was discovered, and astronomy as a pure science was divorced from astrology. To Hellenistic astronomers we owe our calendar, for one of them persuaded Julius Caesar to introduce into Rome the old Egyptian calendar, slightly modified and corrected. The addition of an extra day once in four years made it more accurate. Archimedes devoted himself to physical studies. Applying his scientific knowledge to contrive weapons of defense, he caused great losses to the Romans when they besieged Syracuse, the city in which he lived. If economic necessity had been as great as military necessity, the ancient world would probably have developed the steam engine as a source of power. Medicine likewise felt the influence of the scientific spirit. Unfortunately, however, it is impossible even to enumerate in this book the scientific discoveries of the age. Considered as a whole, they testify to the great intellectual acumen of the Greek people.

The modern world has taken centuries to relearn what was common knowledge to students in the Hellenistic Age. Christian theologians, for example, long held steadfastly to the idea that the earth was the center of the universe; and, asserting the subordination of science to religion, fought bitterly against astronomers who taught that the earth revolves about the sun. The shift from scientific investigation to religion, which char-

acterized the first three centuries of the Christian Era, was in large measure responsible for the oblivion that hid the discoveries of Hellenistic science during the Middle Ages. When mankind as a whole turned its attention chiefly to the future life of the soul, magic and superstitious practices were substituted for medicine, and theological works took the place of scientific treatises on library shelves. Led by the philosophers, the whole Roman world became intensely religious. As Stoicism and Neo-Platonism gained in strength, science rapidly declined.

### Greek art

In art, Greece is much more important than the Orient as an instructor for Western artists. It is unnecessary to consider here the development of Greek art in detail. For us its two most important branches are sculpture and architecture, since Greek painting, in which an advanced technique was developed, was not preserved sufficiently to enable Renaissance and modern painters to use it as an inspiration for their work. Sculpture, as true Greek art, began with the youthful and vigorous productions of the so-called Archaic period which ended with the years of the wars with Persia. Thereafter sculpture became more refined in technique and reached what some regard as its period of perfection (460-320 B. C.), as exhibited in the marble statues of the Parthenon. Some modern critics, however, see in this period the beginning of decline.<sup>1</sup>

Two factors in the development of the technique of this second period may well be noted here: (1) the belief of the Greeks that the gods bore human forms, more beautiful than those of their human descendants; and (2) the fondness of the Greeks for athletic exercises. In the games held at the great Hellenic religious festivals, Greek artists had abundant opportunity to view the nude human form in its perfection; and they were not slow to analyze it from the standpoint of both anatomy and art. Thus we find that in knowledge of structure and proportion they made rapid progress. Nor did the Greeks lack opportunity to practice what they learned.

<sup>1</sup>Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (Viking Press, 1937), pp. 161-162.



They filled the centers of arenas where games were held with statues of victorious athletes, and towns from which the victors came were equally ready thus to honor their favorite sons. Likenesses of priests, priestesses, and other benefactors adorned temple precincts; within the temples were statues of divinities, sometimes made of gold and ivory, like Phidias's Athena in the Parthenon and his Zeus at Olympia; and on the buildings themselves pediments, metopes, and friezes were filled with statues and reliefs depicting scenes from appropriate legends.

The Greeks did not lack for materials in which to express their art. The marble quarries of Greece offered a material for sculpture and architecture worthy of the best talents of the artists. Much of their best work, however, was done in bronze, a metal so useful that later vandals melted the statues for utilitarian purposes. Other evidences of the excellence of Greek work are found in the many silver and gold coins which have come down to us from hundreds of city-states, large and small, scattered through the Greek world. From these coins we can trace step by step the changing technique, the stylistic periods, and the varying tendencies of Greek art. Our study of these coins gives us a new appreciation of the widespread artistic ability and taste of the Hellenic world; for when towns, many almost unknown, could produce such work, the average artistic level must have been very high indeed.

The development of art follows closely the tendencies of the age. In its earlier stages art was primarily, though not wholly, civic, for the building and ornamentation of temples was a community enterprise. The gods were simply divine partners, or even citizens, of the city in which they were worshiped. Thus glorification of the god and beautification of the city went hand in hand. We have seen how the tyrants created a national Athenian spirit by fostering cults in which all Athenians could share. In the time of Pericles the Acropolis, newly crowned by the Parthenon and the Propylaea, was symbolic of the greatness of the Delian League and its Athenian capital, a monument to the victory which Athens and her allies had won over the Persians who had burned the older

temples there. The calm dignity and idealized human beauty of the Parthenon sculptures played an important part in forming the artistic taste of nineteenth-century Europe, after they had been removed to the British Museum in London by Lord Elgin.

In the fourth century B. C., when sculptors had achieved mastery over their materials and had learned the principles of human anatomy, growing individualism led to realism. Then artists began to give to their statues faces and bodily postures expressive of violent suffering and passionate emotion. When we pass to Alexander and the Hellenistic Age, we find realism well established. Beginning with Lysippus, Alexander's favorite sculptor, artists devoted more and more of their time to the portrayal of monarchs, so successfully that we can see in a king's successive portraits the effects of growing age and dissipation upon his face. Hellenistic striving for effect is seen in the Laocoön, a group which in early modern times was considered the acme of perfection in ancient art. During the Renaissance, when Italy was becoming conscious of the greatness of Greco-Roman civilization, knowledge of Greek art was based upon the study of the Roman copies of Hellenistic art which the Italians dug up and preserved. The works of the great Greek masters of the fifth and fourth centuries B. C. were not known to the critics of that day. Their enthusiasm was expressed for the Roman copies. Hence it is not surprising that Roman imitations of Hellenistic art determined the taste of the period opening with the Renaissance. Today we know more about the works of the Greek artists, and our standards of judgment are more critical. Nevertheless we should not underrate the importance of the uncritical Renaissance admiration for ancient art, for it served as an inspiration to painters and sculptors alike.

In architecture, as in sculpture, we recognize the civic nature of Greek civilization; the finest of Greek buildings were for the gods of the city-state. In the great age of the fifth century B. C., men dwelt in simple houses; splendid marble dwellings were reserved for the divinities who brought glory to their worshipers. The Athenian Acropolis—with the Par-

thenon, the Erechtheum, the processional gateway called the Propylaea, the theater of Dionysus, in which the great dramatic festivals were given by the city, and the little temple of the Wingless Victory on the summit, give evidence of the place of architecture in Greek life.

Greek temples were usually simple in plan. They were rectangular, and they had gabled roofs supported by walls or columns. The result was an harmonious whole in which ornamentation was subordinated to architecture. A study of temples built during different ages reveals how Greek architects improved the general plan and the details of construction as their artistic sense grew towards perfection. The ratio of length to breadth was altered to give better proportion; in the Parthenon, for example, this ratio was changed even after the foundations had been laid. So, too, experience taught Greek architects how to make the low Doric columns and their simple capitals more graceful. Since the plain Doric order was unsuited for all buildings and all parts, the Ionic order with its more slender columns was used to give variety and greater ornament. Finally the ornate Corinthian capital became a popular substitute for the Ionic, particularly in Roman times.

Greek classical architecture was not of monumental size. In Hellenistic times, however, when monarchs became the builders, there was a tendency to measure the glory of kings by the size of their buildings; and in architecture, as in sculpture, deterioration in taste resulted from that constant striving for effect which characterizes art when it becomes a servant of individualism enthroned.

### Greek literature

Western literature begins with Homer's poems: the *Iliad*, dealing with the quarrel of Achilles and Agamemnon during the siege of Troy; and the *Odyssey*, which relates the adventurous return of Odysseus to his home in Ithaca. These epics have been schoolbooks for generations of young students—Greek, Roman, German, French, English, and American; and they have set the style for epic poets in every age. For the Greeks they became a sort of Bible; in Rome they helped to



transform the animistic gods of early Latium into beings with human bodies and minds like those of men. Virgil, Dante, and Milton, each in his own way and in his own time, carried on the tradition.

Homer created the epic, and later Greek writers created other types of literature. The objective narrative of Homer was followed by the songs of the lyric poets, who sang of personal experiences and passions, love and hate, the dangers of war and the delights of peace, the quieter pleasures of the mind, and the attractions of the wine cup. Sappho, writing for the girls who were her friends and pupils—and about them, too—gave her name to a meter much used by the Roman poet Horace. Other poets turned their minds to the composition of choral odes to be sung by groups of dancers; and when drama came into being in honor of the god Dionysus, choral poetry became an integral part of dramatic structure. The plots themselves were based on incidents chosen from the myths and legends of Greece, culled largely from epic sources.

To these same oft-told tales the three great fifth-century Athenian tragedians, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, gave an enduring value, for in their hands the stories became a medium for the discussion of the changing moral problems of the age. Of the three, Euripides the modernist probably suits our taste the best, just as he suited best the restless skepticism of the Hellenistic Age. Comedy also developed. Though Aristophanes used it for political satire, it soon became the polite comedy of manners, and as such it has come down to the modern theater through the medium of the Latin plays of Plautus and Terence.

When people recognized that prose also was a suitable means of literary expression, history began to appear. Herodotus, the Father of History and one of the greatest storytellers of all times, wrote the history of the Persian invasions leading up to the battles of Marathon and Salamis; and to show the immensity of the struggle he compiled from many sources an account of the history of the Near East. The first critical history, written by Thucydides, deals with the causes and events of the Peloponnesian War, which, in its magnitude

and results, was as significant to the Greek world as the World War is to our own.

Oratory was no less important than history, for the Greeks were forced by their system of popular government to make much greater use of the spoken word to persuade their fellows than would be possible today. Moreover, in the comparatively simple society of Greece, men pleaded their own cases in court; instead of hiring lawyers, they frequently employed writers to compose speeches for them. Thus Demosthenes not only employed his talents for the defense of Greece against the menace of Macedon, but also wrote orations for other men to deliver.

Another prose type was the dialogue, used effectively by Plato in his philosophic writings, as truly literature in his hands as other forms of literary art.

Although it is customary to speak slightly of the literature of the Hellenistic period and to call it polished and artificial rather than inspired, much of what was then written still lives; Hellenistic writings did much to mold Latin literature, and modern literature through the Latin. When Rome first began to admire and to imitate Greece, Homer and the Hellenistic poets were her models. Virgil's pastoral poetry and his story of Dido's love for Aeneas show that Virgil owed as much to his Hellenistic predecessors as he did to Homer, for pastoral poetry was an outgrowth of Hellenistic urban life, and love was a popular motif in Hellenistic literature.

### THE GREEK CONTRIBUTION TO WESTERN CIVILIZATION

During the Hellenistic Age the power of Rome was rising in the West. In the course of Rome's conquest of the Mediterranean world she turned eastward in the opening years of the second century B. C. and brought under her dominion first the Greek lands and finally the whole Hellenistic world. But Rome's conquest of Greek lands did not mean the extinction of Greek civilization. That civilization lived on to influence all peoples who later came upon the stage of history.

Greek civilization was so far superior to the Roman that it

never lost its preëminence. When all the Western world learned to speak Latin, the Orient continued to use Greek, which remained the language of educated men for generations. Marcus Aurelius, a Roman emperor, wrote his philosophic meditations in Greek, and the Stoic philosophy which he professed was that of an Athenian school. Even Greek works that are not preserved were not without effect; for in the days when Rome went to Greece for her education, they made copies, abridgments, translations, and imitations which enable us to understand and estimate the service rendered by Greece to Rome, and thus, indirectly, to the modern world. Cicero, for example, in his philosophical writings, preserves the ideas of many Greek philosophers whose work influenced him and, through his writings, all succeeding ages. Even Cicero's oratorical style, which was the result of a close study of Greek orators, has been of inestimable value in molding literary style in many modern languages.

When the western half of the Roman Empire had disintegrated under the force of the Teutonic invasions, Greece continued to live throughout the Middle Ages until the capture of Constantinople in the fifteenth century; and during the Renaissance revival of interest in classical learning, Greece became again the tutor of the West, partly through the ancient books which had been preserved, partly through the scholars from Constantinople who could read the ancient language. Earlier than this, too, Greek thought had come to Western universities through the Arabic culture of Spain. No greater proof of the regard in which Greek thinkers were held in the Middle Ages can be found than the place occupied by Aristotle in the theology of the medieval schoolmen. He was the Master for men who knew. Thus Greek culture has never ceased to influence the life of the Mediterranean world and its successors; it continues to affect each generation according to the needs and conditions of the age.

In our summary account of Hellenic culture we have indicated from time to time the chief contributions made by the Greeks to Western civilization. Let us recapitulate briefly. The great constructive period of Greek civilization covered



the fifth and fourth centuries B. C. In the Hellenistic period we observed the decline of the city-state, social and political upheavals, a scattering of Hellenic energies among the Greco-Oriental monarchies, and the creation of new centers of culture embedded in the absolutisms of the East. But even then Greece continued to take the lead in civilization. Greeks became the teachers of Orientals; and when the Romans overran the East, Greeks became their teachers also.

Because Greek culture had durable values, its intellectual achievements constitute a splendid contribution to world culture. The Greek people were preëminently thinkers and artists. Much of their work in literature, in science, and in art has been preserved because the ancient world recognized its excellence. The Greeks were a people possessed of great imagination, eager always to learn and to improve upon the achievements of their predecessors. Their curiosity prompted them to investigate such things as ultimate cause, the nature of God, the relation between mind and matter, the basis of human existence, and the nature of the Good. From these investigations we have philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, and politics, a multitude of systems evolved in the course of long-continued criticism of earlier teachings. Their investigation of nature laid foundations, not always accepted today, for our natural sciences. Their improvement of Oriental mathematics made the name Euclid synonymous with geometry. In art and literature, as well as in thought, although later peoples have created new literary types, the Greeks have always been a source, an inspiration, and a model for writers, sculptors, painters, and architects.

The humanistic spirit of the Greek way of life constitutes another gift to Western culture. When the Greeks turned their thought to man, and to man's happiness as the central theme and the primary goal of human existence, they developed a philosophy which, though the Middle Ages ignored and despised it, the Renaissance eagerly embraced and passed on to modern society. Greek humanism took man as he was with his talents and gifts of body and mind, his passions and his animal appetites; and sought to civilize him, sought to

develop him as a many-sided creature for the fullest participation in the culture of his age. In the process it aimed to inculcate a scale of values which should act at once as a wise guide to conduct and a check upon excesses. ". . . Greek humanism looked life squarely in the face, and frankly accepted it to the full for what it could give. The Greek had a delight in living here and now, and thought little of the future world. He was also very frank in his attitude to the body, but his balance saved him from mere animalism or athleticism."<sup>1</sup> The rediscovery of Greek humanism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries introduced a new and powerful influence into modern civilization. (For summary of Greek civilization see Appendix, p. 1037.)

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Trever, *The Ancient Near East and Greece* (Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1936), Vol. I, p. 150.

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## ROMAN CIVILIZATION

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**L**ONG AFTER Athens had become the center of an advanced civilization Rome remained an uneducated peasant community, without a literature and without a native art. The retarded development of Roman culture can be explained largely in terms of geographic influence. Italy's backbone is formed by the Apennines, a range of mountains running the length of the peninsula. Plains suitable for agriculture lie largely on the western side. About midway of the western coast is the plain of Latium. Here, on the river Tiber, a few miles from the sea, was Rome. Since Rome faced westward, and away from the civilization of the East, it developed culturally much more slowly than Greece, which, as we have already seen, was able at all times to borrow largely from the cultures of the Near East.

Rome began, so the legends say, as a band of outlaws settled on the Palatine, one of the seven hills on the Tiber. Significantly enough, from the name of this hill we get our word "palace," the home of rulers. Whatever be the truth about the outlaw band gathered together under the leadership of Romulus, it is doubtless true, as another story leads us to infer, that an early Latin settlement on the Palatine united with other settlements on the neighboring hills, and thus began that gradual absorption of neighboring lands which was to be typical of Rome's future growth.

## EXPANSION OF THE ROMAN WORLD

With the development of Greek civilization an advanced culture entered the eastern gates of Europe. The Romans carried it westward along the Mediterranean. This achievement is a salient fact in Roman history. At first Rome was only one of many towns constituting the Latin tribe settled in the small plain (Latium) south of the lower Tiber. In time, however, she became the leader of the tribe, and then, like the ripples which form in ever-widening circles when a stone is dropped into a quiet pond, the boundaries of Rome's sphere of influence widened until she became the head of a confederation embracing all Italy. Once mistress of Italy, she next proceeded to extend her power in all directions—into northern Africa and Spain, into the Balkans, into Hellenistic Greece—until by the middle of the second century B. C. Rome had become the greatest Mediterranean power. She next spread into Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. Striking westward, she brought Gaul under her control, and finally, leaping the English Channel, possessed herself of Britain as far north as the Scottish Highlands. By the early years of the second century A. D., she had brought her conquests to full circle. A ring of Roman provinces completely surrounding the Mediterranean had transformed that sea into a Roman lake. Possibly more significant for the history of Europe was the extension of Roman rule to the Rhine and the Danube. In Dacia (Roumania), southern Germany, and along the shore of the North Sea, Rome even pushed beyond these rivers. In this fashion Rome set a permanent stamp upon the civilization of western Europe. To Rome's northern conquests, too, we must ascribe in part the later shift in civilization from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.

Geographic factors are not to be overlooked in explaining Roman expansion; both the westward outlook of Italy and her central geographical position played a part. The tip of the Italian "boot" points southwestward across narrow waters to Carthage; and Carthage became Rome's first transmarine enemy. With the defeat of Carthage in the first and second

Punic Wars (third century B. C.), Rome became mistress of the western Mediterranean. The importance of this event cannot be overestimated, for it meant the ultimate extension of the Greco-Roman civilization westward. Moreover, the central location of Italy in the Mediterranean made it possible for Rome to hold both East and West, and to serve as the medium by which Eastern culture—somewhat modified and changed—was disseminated in all the western provinces.

### **Characteristics of Roman imperial policy**

The conspicuous success of the Romans in building a world empire and maintaining it for so long a period is not to be accounted for in terms of military power alone. The Romans displayed conspicuous wisdom in their imperial attitudes and policies. Two important aspects of Roman statesmanship were the understanding tolerance shown in dealing with subject peoples and a remarkable capacity to promote their advancement without resort to coercion.

Rome's tolerance in her relations with conquered peoples was due in part to her enlightened, practical approach to the problem, and in part to a recognition of the right of every people to adhere to its ancestral customs. This toleration was particularly noticeable in the realms of law and religion. The government might try to prevent Romans from practicing foreign rites considered detrimental to morals or discipline, but for the most part no restrictions were laid upon aliens. The treatment of the Christians does not constitute a refutation of Roman tolerance, for it is clear that it was the political threat of Christianity to the Roman state and not Christianity as a religion that brought down persecution on Christian heads. Rome's tolerant policy undoubtedly played a large part in making the Romans the greatest empire-builders of antiquity, for coupled with the excellence of the culture which Rome had to offer, it explains the comparatively little resistance shown to the infiltration of Roman ideas. Thus it was an important factor in the rapid Romanization which resulted.

Rome's capacity to promote the advance of civilization among the backward peoples of the Empire without resort to



force is obviously related to her policy of tolerance. Unlike modern imperialists who assert that theirs is a great "mission" to civilize barbarous peoples, the Romans proclaimed no such mission. The Romanizing process which accompanied Roman colonization was not a thing imposed upon conquered peoples so much as a process promoted by the conquered peoples themselves, who soon became aware of the peace and good order which followed in the wake of Roman power. Commonly they were desirous and proud of becoming "Romans." Thus Rome Latinized Italy and Italy Romanized Spain and Gaul. The Romanization of Gaul is the more remarkable, for Gaul possessed wealth and culture of its own before it was conquered by Julius Caesar. Even to the last, when Rome's assimilative power had declined, Roman civilization possessed enough vitality to put its stamp upon her Teutonic conquerors, for in the course of time these conquerors were amalgamated and ceased to be German.

#### **Peoples of the Roman world**

When we come to consider the human factors involved in the building of Roman civilization we are confronted by a great medley of peoples, each of which contributed something to the ultimate product. During the second millennium B. C., about the time when the Aryan invaders were coming into Greece, a closely related group of peoples speaking an Indo-European language came into northern Italy. Settling first in the lake region, they extended from there southward into the Po valley and across the Apennines, until they occupied a large part of the peninsula. When we come down to historical times we find Italy held by many tribes speaking different, though closely related, languages. This group of tribes we call Italian. Latin was the language spoken by the small Italian tribe which occupied the plain of Latium.

The Italians of historical times, however, were probably not pure descendants of the Aryan invaders, for before their advent Italy was inhabited by a Neolithic people of the Mediterranean race, some of whom retreated before the invaders into the mountainous regions to the south or the northwest.

Others, however, probably remained and intermarried with the invaders. Just how great the intermixture was it is now difficult to say, but whatever its extent, the Italian element in the peninsula remained so homogeneous that it readily absorbed Latin culture and the Latin language wherever Rome sent her colonists to occupy strategic positions among them. While the Italians were allies of Rome, they served in her armies side by side with the legions; when they became citizens of Rome they were readily amalgamated with their Roman cousins.

The Etruscans, a mysterious people who entered the peninsula later than the Italians, were probably of Anatolian origin. They occupied the region called Etruria, north of the Tiber. They were aliens, speaking a strange language (not even yet deciphered), and their political dominion was that of energetic foreigners exploiting the more numerous native population to secure power and wealth for themselves. When Rome finally overcame Etruria, the Etruscan culture was so firmly established that amalgamation of the Romans and the Etruscans was more difficult than amalgamation of the Romans with other peoples in the Italian regions of the peninsula. Yet the Latinization of Etruria was inevitable. Roman literature owes a great debt to the Etruscan Maecenas, friend of Augustus and patron of Virgil and Horace.

Another alien element in Italy was introduced by the Greek colonies settled in the south. Their influence was varied: they played an important part in the development of Roman art and literature, they provided ships and trained sailors for Rome's fleets, and they became the merchants and manufacturers of Italy at a time when Rome was wholly engaged in agriculture.

Finally we must mention the Gauls, another branch of the Aryan peoples, whose home in historic times was France, Belgium, and western Germany. They came into Italy during the fourth century B. C., and after driving the Etruscans out of the Po valley, settled there as a more or less constant menace to Italian security. In the course of time, however, Roman colonies disseminated Latin civilization in Cisalpine Gaul, and the Roman frontier moved northward to the Alps.

By the first century A. D., the inhabitants of the Po valley were scarcely distinguishable from the Romans, for Gauls, both here and in the land beyond the Alps, were readily assimilated and became active agents in spreading and preserving Roman civilization.

Such were the peoples who inhabited Italy in the years of Roman expansion in the peninsula. When Rome became involved in wars beyond the seas, another element entered to affect in greater and greater measure the character of the Roman people. Every military campaign meant the importation of hordes of slaves, and when small peasant farms gave way to great estates, the wealthy landlords relied more and more upon cheap slave labor, much of it imported from the East. Roman urban households likewise were staffed with servants of this kind. Thus Greeks and Orientals of all types came more and more to swell the urban proletariat and to take the place of native Italian labor in the country. In the course of generations, when manumission had done its work, their descendants became a part of the free population of Italy.

#### **The extension of Roman citizenship**

It is clear from this brief review of the peoples who inhabited the Roman world that ethnically the term "Roman" changes with the centuries. In republican times, the Roman was, for the most part, a Latin, slightly mixed with the blood of kindred Italian tribes. But as time passed the word lost that significance, for the Roman policy with respect to the granting of citizenship was liberal—much more liberal than that of the city-states of Greece. During her advance to domination in Italy it was not unusual for Rome to admit conquered peoples to full equality in citizenship, sometimes after a period of probation, sometimes immediately. By the first century B. C. the whole free population of Italy from the Alps to the toe of the boot—including the Gauls of the Po valley—had become Romans. Slaves also, irrespective of origin, were admitted to citizenship upon emancipation. The ease with which a slave could obtain his freedom was a noteworthy feature of Roman life.



During the last years of the Republic and under the Empire, the leaven of Roman citizenship was extended to provinces east and west, chiefly to individuals whose wealth or influence or ability made such grants expedient. Thus we find in Rome senators of Greek, Oriental, and Gallic origin. The Greek biographer Plutarch, the Athenian philosopher Herodes Atticus, and the Apostle Paul were Romans. Finally, at the beginning of the third century A. D., a grant of citizenship was made to all freemen of the empire.

### **Diffusion as a factor in Roman civilization**

In an earlier chapter Roman civilization in its later stages was described as a fusion of Oriental, Greek, and Roman elements. The truth of that statement becomes clear when we turn to examine the contributions which came to Rome from the East and from the Greeks. It was one of the characteristics of Roman culture that it was able to grow steadily and surely, adapting itself to the needs of the age and absorbing the elements of culture of alien groups both within and outside Italy, whenever such elements would assist in promoting Roman development. In fact, it is hard to say which was the greater, the influence of Rome upon the provinces or the influence of the provinces upon Rome. Rome's readiness to assimilate greatly promoted the advance of her civilization.

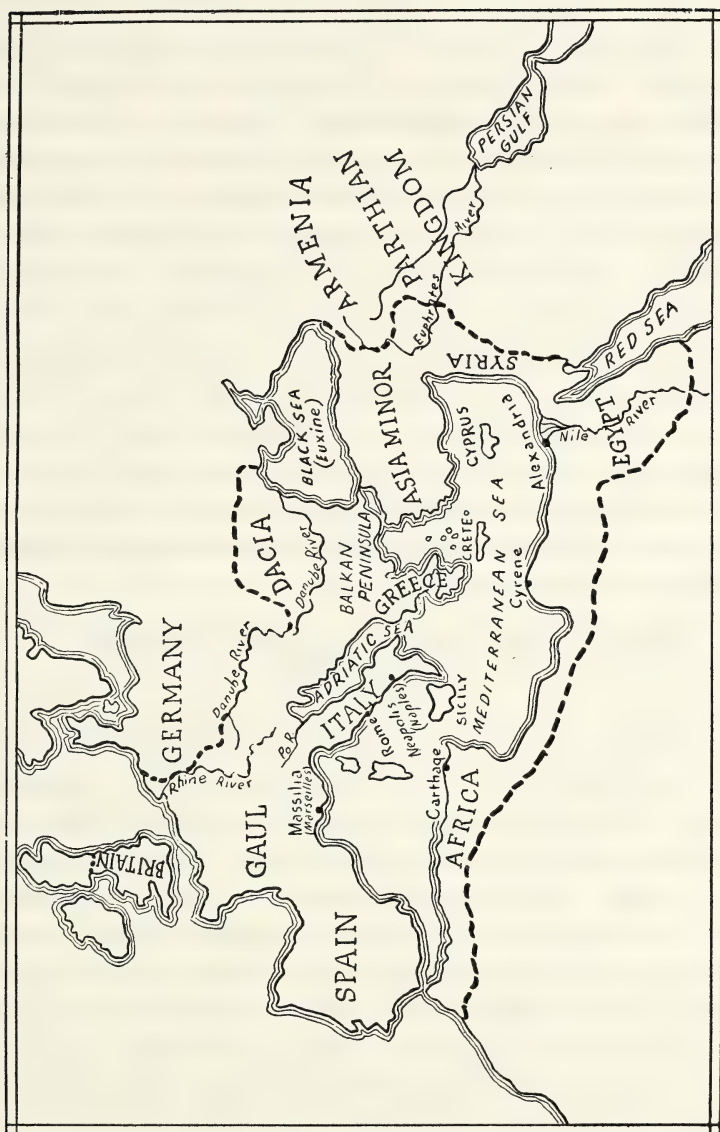
The first alien influence to affect Latin culture was the Etruscan. In the eighth century B. C., the Etruscans, bent on extending their commercial contacts, occupied Rome and Latium. Thus the Latins were brought under the influence of a higher civilization, which, through commerce, was in constant touch with Greece and Carthage. During the Etruscan domination, and later when Rome herself had interests in Campania, a mixture of Oriental ideas and beliefs began to work upon the simple Latin people. As we shall see later, these influences effected definite changes in the character of Roman religion. The Etruscans taught the Romans how to foretell the future by observing the entrails of animals and the flight of birds. They taught them how to drain their swamps. They gave them insignia for their magistrates, such as the double-headed

ax in the fasces borne before the consuls. Greek influences were inextricably mixed with Etruscan in Roman culture during this period, for the alphabet brought to Italy by the Greeks living around the Bay of Naples became eventually the Latin alphabet used by Rome and all of western Europe today.

Centuries later, Roman conquest and trade, together with the liberality of Roman policy, opened the door wide to the influence of the East. Greeks became the schoolmasters of Rome. They taught the Roman boys the Greek language and literature when the Romans had become sufficiently trained to appreciate their beauty. They translated Greek poems for the training of their pupils. They introduced Rome to Greek legends, and they flattered Roman pride by ascribing to Romulus and Remus descent from the Trojan hero Aeneas. Thus belatedly Rome claimed for herself a place in the Homeric legends.

"Conquered Greece took Rome her captor captive," so Horace wrote. By this he meant that Rome's contacts with Greek lands soon convinced thoughtful Romans that Greek culture was far superior to Roman. During the first Punic War (264-241 B. C.), Roman armies were quartered for a time in Sicily. Here the soldiers whiled away their idle moments in Greek cities like Syracuse, learned a little Greek, read the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, went to Greek plays in the theaters, and came home with the idea that Rome was most uncultured. To celebrate the victorious end of the war, Greek plays translated into Latin were produced. Roman literature had begun. In the second century B. C., Roman armies were serving in Greece itself. Philhellenism became the vogue; and thenceforth it became customary to study under Greek masters, either in Rome, or at one of the seats of Greek learning, preferably Athens.

Later, when Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt had been incorporated in the Roman Empire, Rome's direct contact with the Near East began. At first, however, the effect of Oriental civilization upon the upper strata of Roman society was slight, inasmuch as the culture of the educated classes in Rome's eastern provinces was Greek. Still the advent of Oriental princes



9. THE ROMAN EMPIRE



and princesses to Rome and constant intercourse between Roman governors and provincials served to inoculate even the aristocracy with Oriental religions and law. Slaves from the Near East, living as nurses and domestic servants in Roman households, likewise exercised an ever-growing influence, particularly upon women and children. As soon as an Oriental group could afford a permanent place of worship, it erected a temple or shrine to the local Oriental deity which it had worshipped at home. Rome then became filled with the meeting places of a multitude of queer religious sects. In time, descendants of manumitted slaves climbed higher and higher in the social scale, and they too exerted a marked effect on Roman society. Thus Paul found an audience in Rome for his Christian teaching. Even relatives of an emperor were charged with adherence to some non-Roman belief. Outside of Rome, the soldiers recruited in the Eastern provinces were active missionaries for the spread of Oriental cults, just at a time when Christian missionaries were carrying the Gospel to all parts of the Empire.

#### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF ROMAN CIVILIZATION

We possibly think of the Romans as warriors first and last, and of Mars, the war god, as their patron deity. But to the early Latins Mars was a god of vegetation, an agricultural divinity. It would be much more accurate to think of Romans as peasants cultivating the fields of Latium, for they preserved their peasant psychology for centuries. They early developed a strong feeling for property rights. Their central location, on a plain surrounded by a ring of mountains inhabited by tribes eager to push down into the cultivated land, made their position precarious; and the necessity of military discipline in the face of constant invasions turned them into soldiers. The story of Cincinnatus and his plow is symbolic of Rome's peasant armies.

In our study of Rome, we are reminded in a number of respects of the early economic life of the Greeks. As in Greece, so in Rome, agriculture was the dominant concern; and to the

end of Roman times, so far as the Romans themselves were concerned, the possession of land continued to be the badge of one's social status. The early Latin village communities, like the Greek, consisted largely of free men who owned the soil and cultivated it to meet their own needs. They were hard-working, unimaginative, self-reliant men, jealous of their freedom, devoted to their families, intrepid in defense of their property. For a long period it was from the ranks of these hardy farmers that the legions of Rome were recruited. Until the end of the Republic in the first century B. C., Rome remained an agricultural state, largely because her conquests in Italy provided new agricultural lands for her expanding population—in much the same way as the American frontier served the older, settled communities of the Atlantic seaboard. The ruling classes were likewise interested in agriculture; even the nobles were scarcely more than rich peasants until centuries later when the luxuries of the East made the capital a cosmopolitan center. The senators and other men of wealth preferred investments in land. In fact, magistrates, provincial governors, and senators were debarred by custom and law from engaging in commerce. Towards the end of the Republic, it is true, there developed a class of businessmen whose influence became more and more important in determining the policies of Rome, but they were moneylenders, tax-gatherers, and contractors for public works. Commerce, for the most part, remained in the hands of Rome's subjects in the provinces and in the municipalities of southern Italy.

This picture of a simple agricultural society, with its noble or patrician landholders at the top of the social scale and a mass of commoners or plebs below, who tilled their own acres, gradually underwent a marked change with the development of Roman imperialism. Since the small farmers continued to form the backbone of Roman armies even when the legions were campaigning in far-distant provinces, the land was gradually drained of its supply of agricultural labor, and a situation arose which contributed to a transformation of Roman farming. The tendency was now toward the displacement of small holders by a class of wealthy proprietors who estab-

lished themselves in luxurious villas and employed on their extensive estates thousands of slaves captured in war or purchased in the slave markets of the East. Thus began the decay of the free agricultural class. These changes were accompanied by the adoption of Greek scientific agricultural methods. On the large estates olives, fruits, and vines were substituted for grain, hitherto the chief Italian crop; and in many parts of Italy large plantations took the place of farms.

By the second century B. C. large numbers of discontented, landless men had appeared in Roman society, some of them wandering to the city to find free bread at the cost of the state. The contrast with the early days of the Republic is further sharpened with the influx of hordes of slaves. The recurring wars from the latter part of the third century B. C. on brought in a stream of captives from Carthage, Gaul, Spain, Greece, and Asia Minor—to be sold into slavery. The generous treatment usually accorded slaves in Greece was not characteristic of Roman masters, except in the possible case of domestic slaves, who usually received fair treatment. In some parts of Italy, those who labored as agricultural workers on the great estates were treated so brutally that they rose in serious revolts against their masters. As in Greece, so also in Italy a great increase in wealth resulted from economic expansion and the flow of treasure from foreign conquests. While this enrichment added to the material splendor of Rome and introduced a hitherto unknown luxurious scale of living among the wealthy, poverty deepened among large sections of the Roman masses.

The development of Roman industry follows the general pattern observable in the history of societies passing from a simple to a complex economic life. Early industry was carried on in the household to satisfy the needs of the family. This was as true of the patrician as of the small farmer. In fact, since machinery never supplanted handicrafts in Italy, domestic production for family consumption continued to a great extent throughout Roman history. The industrial needs of the large estates were supplied by a variety of skilled craftsmen attached to the estate. This situation continued



until about the second century B. C., when agriculture, now carried on on a commercial basis, provided the large land-holders with money to purchase the finer products brought in from the East.

When industry developed in Rome and other centers to supply local or wider markets, it was commonly carried on in homes or small shops, under a guild organization. Manufacturing, like commerce, was held in low esteem by the governing classes. The labor was largely performed by slaves, and this fact accounts in part for the slow industrial progress. But technical skill was highly developed, and in some places special factors stimulated manufacturing and made possible a wide market. Thus the pottery of Arretium was found in all parts of the Empire during the first century B. C.; in Puteoli on the Bay of Naples there was a large metal industry with transmarine markets. Here factory methods were employed, and production was on a large scale. But the ancient Roman world, despite the ease with which one could travel, the peace which reigned within its borders, and the free trade which Rome never tried to break down by the imposition of customs barriers, remained in large measure economically a collection of more or less self-sufficing communities. In other words, the cost of producing and distributing manufactured products was at no place reduced to the point where one favored district could gain a world monopoly. Manufacturing required little capital; tools were simple and inexpensive; technical skill could be acquired. Thus popular articles could readily be imitated wherever the demand promised a small market.

### ROMAN GOVERNMENT AND LAW

As in the case of other Italian tribes, the Latins, settled on the hills overlooking the Tiber, were governed by their tribal chieftains until the eighth century B. C., when Roman rulers were displaced by a line of Etruscan kings, who had conquered the Latin lands. The history of the Roman Republic may be said to begin with the expulsion of the Etruscan rulers about 500 B. C. The early Republic combined aristocratic

domination with limited electoral privileges granted to the commons or plebeians along with certain safeguards set up for their protection against tyranny. Only those of noble or patrician blood could sit in the Roman Senate, or be chosen as consuls, or fill other administrative offices in the government. But almost from the beginning of the republic there set in a process of slow change whereby the plebs obtained an increasing number of political rights.

A survey of the political history of the Republic reveals a striking contrast between Romans and Greeks in the matter of governmental capacity. The Romans displayed a broad-minded conservatism in their political life. Unlike the Greeks, the Romans were averse to experiments and revolutions. Political intelligence guided by experience was their general rule. From the expulsion of the Etruscan kings (509 B. C.) to the period of the Gracchi (132 B. C.), who organized a revolt in behalf of the landless farmers, there had been little or no civil war. Instead, Rome had passed through many serious internal crises by compromise and by recognition of the common interests of conflicting parties. The Roman people possessed a fund of sound common sense which enabled them to build for the future without destroying the work of the past.

#### **Roman government outside Italy**

From the time when Rome gained her first province (Sicily, 241 B. C.) to the grant of citizenship to provincials in 212 A. D., a sharp distinction was drawn between the government of Italy and that of the provinces. Italy was free soil, not subject to taxation. When Rome entered upon her career of conquest overseas, the Italian cities were independent allies of Rome, bound to her by a system of alliances which secured their rights; before the end of the Republic they had become Roman municipalities with all the rights and privileges of citizenship. In Italy the powers of Roman magistrates were subject to important constitutional limitations designed to prevent abuse of power. Both Romans and Italians were therefore privileged. They were the rulers.

In the provinces, on the other hand, Rome took over the rights and property of the rulers whom she dispossessed, setting up provincial governments modeled on the governments which she found in operation. Where despotism was the rule, Rome assumed control. Where there were free governments, Rome ordinarily respected the existing system, varying the amount of freedom with local conditions. Thus in many provinces, particularly where Greek city-states existed, free cities exempt from taxation and interference by the governor continued to exist. Athens is a noteworthy example, but countless others could be named. Other cities maintained their own municipal government, paying a stipulated tax collected by themselves to Rome. In general, however, the governor as the representative of Rome was master, a petty king in fact, possessing full judicial, military, and civil authority; and the taxes collected from the subject communities and the rents which came from confiscated public lands of the defeated government were at Rome's disposal. Though each province had a constitution defining its rights and obligations, there was at first no effective check against arbitrary exactions by Roman governors. In the course of time, however, more and more stringent laws were passed to safeguard provincial inhabitants from extortion.

### **The decline of the city-state**

We must remember that Rome was a city-state, which grew into an empire of city-states. But important as was the city-state, both as a factor in ancient civilization and as an integral part of the Roman system of government, Rome created conditions which made its decline inevitable. The first step toward this decline was taken in the early days of the Republic, when the boundaries of Rome were extended north and south to include the lands of neighboring peoples. Rome's liberal policy of admitting Italian peoples to citizenship carried with it the seeds of decay; for as the population and territory of a city-state increases, the efficiency of its government tends to decrease. When a city-state embraces the extensive territory of a peninsula like Italy, as Rome did in the last days



of the Republic, it is idle to talk about popular sovereignty and democratic government, for the elections and legislative acts of the assemblies represent nothing more than the momentary pleasure of that group of citizens which chance or the political leaders have brought together at the time of voting.

In the case of Rome, the result was that government was left more and more to the Senate, a body of wealthy landlords, who spent their lives in political service at home and in the provinces. This body alone was competent, by reason of its political experience and intimate knowledge of the intricate problems of foreign and domestic affairs, to care for the administrative details of government. By common consent, after political rights had been gained by the plebeians from the patrician aristocracy, the Senate became the dominant ruling body in Rome, and its members formed a new aristocracy of service to the state.

This arrangement went almost unchallenged until all classes of Romans realized that Rome's political supremacy was an economic asset which could be made to pay dividends. Exploitation of subject peoples then became a serious evil. The poor of Rome wanted cheap grain from the provincial taxes; the wealthy businessmen wanted opportunities to invest money in the provinces and the privilege of collecting taxes from them; the senators learned now to make their governorships profitable. The military problem became acute, for each provincial governor possessed full civil and military power in his own province. He recruited his troops from volunteers, and his soldiers were of course loyal to him alone. Thus there was no longer a unified Roman army, and responsible control; for the Senate, divided into factions, was powerless to curb rival leaders backed by military force. So the way was opened to provincial governors like Caesar to seize control of Rome and Italy. Anarchy and civil wars were inevitable.

#### **The transition to the Empire, first century B. C.**

In order to end this dangerous situation Augustus introduced reforms destined to change the Roman Republic into a monarchy. Realizing that effective government was impos-

sible unless the army could be controlled, he centered military control in one individual—the emperor himself. (The word “emperor” comes from the Latin *imperator*, which means “commander.”) This move was both wise and practical, for long experience had shown that a political body like the Roman Senate was an ineffective instrument in military matters. In other respects, however, Augustus’s program of reform tended to be conservative. He revived the old theory that senators were servants of the state, and he, as first citizen of Rome and as the most influential member of the Senate, showed them by example that governors must rule for the good of their subjects. For two centuries this ideal remained theoretically in force, for the best emperors were hard-working rulers, holding themselves and the senators to strict accountability, and even many of the worst emperors were stern in the punishment of provincial misgovernment. Thus under the Empire exploitation of the provinces ceased, and Italy and the subject districts of the Empire were brought to a dead level of uniformity.

In the course of this change, more and more authority came to center in the emperor, and the vitality of the city-state declined. The zeal of the central government on the one hand, and on the other the growing indifference to local affairs which was created by the deadening influence of the imperial system, led to the appointment of imperial supervisors for municipalities. More and more frequently governors and provincial cities referred matters to the emperor for advice; the Roman Senate tended to lose its initiative; and bureaucratic government ensued, at first paternalistic, and later, when the problems of government became acute, despotic.

The political history of Rome presents, therefore, at least three well-defined steps. In the first stage, Rome, a city-state, gained and maintained by honesty and fair dealing toward its allies uncontested leadership in a confederation of Italian peoples. In this period Rome’s political sagacity developed a well-balanced government resting upon popular sovereignty, a political system suitable for the conditions of the time. In the second stage, democratic Rome gained a vast empire, but

her political system broke down because the simple machinery of a government devoted mainly to peace and self-protection was unsuited to the rule of an empire requiring standing armies. The temptation of Roman officials to use for selfish purposes the power concentrated in their hands resulted in the exploitation of Italy and the provinces alike. In the third stage Rome lost her democracy, for the very efforts initiated by Augustus to remedy the abuses of the late years of the Republic led straight to monarchy, to the decay of the tradition of self-government, and to a renewal of Oriental despotism.

### The development of Roman law

Early Roman conceptions of law were much like those held by the Greeks in a similar stage of development. Law was the inherited custom of the tribe, unwritten, and limited in scope to the ordinary problems of existence. Such was the character of law at the beginning of the Republic and such it remained for the first half century of the existence of the Republic. Little machinery was necessary, for the government gave only a minimum of assistance to individuals in enforcing their claims. Within the family group the *pater familias*, with the advice of the family council, dealt out even-handed justice. The rich patricians advised and assisted their clients,<sup>1</sup> tenants, and poorer neighbors, who in turn were bound to support their patrons. Crimes were few, and permanent criminal courts were established only a short time before the end of the Republic. Civil suits sufficed for the settlement of disputes about land, the collection of debts, and the awarding of compensation for loss of life or limb or for the destruction of property in personal quarrels. When a decision had been rendered, the parties to the suit were left to make final settlement. In many cases the responsibility of the government ceased when it had invoked the gods to bring penalties upon the aggressor.

*The growth of Roman written law.* In the fifth century B. C. this unwritten law became more and more uncertain in

<sup>1</sup>Clients were persons attached to the patrician's household, to whom he acted as a patron and protector.



its operation, for the patrician magistrates, who alone presided over the courts, were likely to interpret the law as best suited the interests of their own class. Moreover, life had become more complicated, and the old customs were no longer adequate. This situation led to the first scientific reform of the Roman legal code—the compilation of the Twelve Tables. In general the Tables did not strike out into new fields; they embodied, rather, ancient Roman customs. They continued in use for more than two and a half centuries.

Another important step in the development of Roman law followed the establishment of the *praetorship*, an office primarily judicial in its scope. Hitherto the consuls, with a few minor officials, had been competent to handle the business of state, to command the armies, to preside over the courts, and to care for the administration of other matters which the simple needs of the community placed in their hands. But in the fourth century B. C. the newly created praetors relieved the consuls of their judicial tasks and introduced a greater degree of specialization into the administration of justice. They now presided over the civil courts, and the creation of the great body of Roman Civil Law was due to them. They were little hampered by legislative acts. The basis of Roman law continued to be ancient custom as embodied in the Twelve Tables; but when precedent failed to cover new factors that developed with the complexity of business, the praetors could apply new principles based on equity rather than on custom and law. Finally, it became customary for the praetor who was in charge of suits between Roman citizens—the *Praetor Urbanus*, as he was called—to draw up each year a statement of legal principles which would be used by him in the settlement of disputes. In this way, as succeeding praetors made changes and additions, Roman law grew rationally and steadily, obsolete rules being discarded and replaced by others more suitable. On these praetors' edicts was based the codification of civil law which was undertaken during the Empire.

Rome, however, was too broad-minded to think it necessary to settle all disputes according to her own local customs. A second praetor, the *Praetor Peregrinus*, presided over suits

arising between aliens in Rome, or between aliens and citizens. In his court, justice was rendered in accordance with the customs of the people who were parties to the suit. Rome thus became acquainted with a wide variety of customs or laws, and since many of these were conflicting, principles of equity were often substituted for law. The opportunity to compare their own customs with those of alien peoples gave the Romans a basis of knowledge of great value in amending their own laws. This was specially true when the Empire brought about fusion between East and West. Thus the Law of Nations tended to supersede the Law of the City (Civil Law), and both in turn were affected by the Law of Nature which the Stoic philosophers emphasized.

*The Justinian Code and its descent to modern times.* Under the Empire, as the functions of the emperors grew, the administration of law came to be more and more the province of the central imperial government. The highest legal authorities were the commanders of the *Praetorian Guard*, many of whom were jurists of note—for example, Ulpian, who did much for the adaptation of Civil Law to the needs of the Empire. Finally, when the law lost its vitality and had ceased to grow, Justinian (527–565 A. D.) through his ministers condensed and codified the large mass of existing legal literature. It was thus rendered suitable for preservation until such time as men, during the Middle Ages, felt the need of learning what Roman experience had to teach them. In the medieval universities, Roman law was one of the most popular studies. It is still the basis of many European codes, and directly or indirectly it has affected the development of all modern systems of law, including international law.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMAN RELIGION

In their religious experiences the Romans passed through several stages, each corresponding to a period in their cultural and political history. The development of Roman religion through the centuries affords an impressive demonstration of the effect of new cultural contacts on the civilization

of a people. Here, as in other aspects of cultural growth, the Romans exhibited a characteristic disposition to adopt and assimilate elements of alien civilizations as they appeared to meet the changing needs of Roman society.

### Early Roman religion

Originally there was little correspondence between the divinities of Rome and those Olympian gods of Greece with whom their names and identities were coupled in later times. The early Latins, as we have seen, were simple peasants, and their religion was associated with their farms and simple fire-sides; it was animistic. Animism, it will be remembered, was a belief in a physical world moved by spirits. Janus was the spirit who watched over the doorway; Vesta the spirit of the fire on the hearth. The Penates guarded the family cupboard; the household Lar was the spirit of the family fortune. The Genius of the family came later to be regarded as a sort of double of the master of the house, and with the Genius there was a Juno for the master's wife. The spirits of the deceased went down into a shadowy underworld, and in their memory were held festivals of propitiation designed to ward off evil influences which they might otherwise exert. Most of the early festivals were connected with sowing, harvesting, and other activities of an agricultural people.

In addition to this religion of the household there was an official cult farther advanced toward polytheism, for here we find the Romans worshiping gods which, like those of the Greeks, were regarded as members of the community. In this cult the primitive sky god of the Aryans, Jupiter, came to be regarded as supreme; associated with him were Juno and Minerva, the trinity for whom the first Roman temple was built. In this public religion, the priests were state officials chosen from the body of citizens to see that the gods were honored according to the ritual which had been handed down from earliest times, a ritual that had lost its meaning and had become unintelligible to the Romans long before Cicero's day. Much of it had originally been designed to bring agricultural wealth to the Roman state.



**The influence of outside contacts**

The second period in religious development began when the Romans were brought into contact with the more advanced cultures of the Etruscans and the Greeks. The Etruscan influence was felt particularly during the period of Etruscan domination in Rome. The Romans began to think of their primitive agricultural spirits as gods in the likeness of men, for the Etruscans, following the Greek fashion, had introduced statues of the gods. Having no mythology of their own, the Romans borrowed from Greek myths and identified their own gods with Greek divinities. They now built temples, and erected statues of the gods. Later, when the Romans came into contact with Greek philosophy, they gradually lost their early religious faith, and by the end of the Republic the state religion had little meaning for educated Romans. Among the peasants, however, the old agricultural animism still continued.

The third stage in Roman religion was a product of the Empire. Rome now was no longer a primitive agricultural community. It embraced the whole of the civilized world, and its inhabitants were gathered from all countries subject to it. Thus foreign religious influences were increasingly powerful; their effect was felt (1) in the lives of the people, and (2) in the establishment of the imperial cult.

The early Christian Era was an age when people were eagerly seeking some form of personal religion that would bring salvation, purification from sins, atonement, and assurance of a life in the world to come happier than that of this world. In this atmosphere many of the old cults of the Near East, purified of their grosser elements, found adherents and flourished, for they promised hope and consolation to the weak and oppressed. The Great Mother of Anatolia, Isis of Egypt, Mithras of Persia, and many others—each made an appeal to the Roman world and found widespread acceptance. In competition with these pagan cults sprung from the Near East, Christianity, another Eastern religion, was able, because of the devotion of its adherents and the assurance of its prom-

ises, to secure so strong a foothold that Constantine enrolled it as an ally in his struggle to gain control of the Roman Empire. When Constantine triumphed, Christianity also triumphed. During the fourth century it became the accepted religion, first of the court, and then of the many who had hitherto resisted its purely religious appeal.

Side by side with the growth of personal religions among the masses in the Roman Empire there was developed a new state cult, universal in its scope. In the Hellenistic Age a ruler cult had developed out of a mixture of Greek and Eastern ideas and practices. Since philosophers had recognized in each mortal man a spark of divinity, and since rulers were far superior to ordinary men in power, it was not hard for the Greeks to regard men like Alexander the Great as gods incarnate. The Eastern tendency to look upon kings as gods or ministers of the gods was operative too. Thus when Rome fell heir to the dominions of the Hellenistic monarchs and became acquainted with Hellenistic peoples, the Romans easily combined their own belief in a personal Genius with Eastern beliefs. Even before the time of Caesar and Augustus, individual Roman generals operating in Greece had been honored with statues and altars. Thus the world over which Rome ruled was prepared to honor the emperors and members of their families as more than human. Augustus, knowing that public sentiment in Italy disapproved of giving worship to living men, tried to avoid criticism by refusing to accept divine honors in Rome and Italy. In the provinces, however, loyalty to the emperor tended to take the form of worship.

The imperial cult was therefore a form of patriotism, giving an opportunity to provincial magnates to show their loyalty and devotion to the head of the Empire. Religious festivals of great magnificence were established in his honor. In Rome the simple ceremonies connected with the cult—libations to the Genius of the emperor and vows for his health and preservation—were analogous to the symbolic homage which we pay to our flag. In an age of polytheism and philosophic pantheism, the imperial cult would be religiously

unobjectionable, except to those who regarded the worship of pagan divinities as disloyalty to the Christian God. Christians could not see that the essence of the cult was political, not religious. Christianity became a crime against the state, not because its positive religious teachings were objectionable, but because Christians manifested a disloyalty to the emperor when they obstinately refused to take part in the imperial cult. Persecution after persecution resulted.

### ROMAN PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, AND EDUCATION

To philosophy and science Rome made few contributions, although some Romans did devote themselves to the study of the philosophies of the Greeks. Cicero's writings have preserved for us much information about Greek philosophy. More inspired was the Epicurean, Lucretius. His attack on superstition, presented with missionary zeal and poetic fervor in a poem, *Of the Nature of Things*, was based on the thesis that scientific laws govern the course of nature. He discussed such things as evolution, the indestructibility of matter, and the atomic theory.

Epicureanism, however, was not a popular philosophy among the Romans. More to their taste was Stoicism, for its teachings were of practical value to a people destined to govern the world, and Stoic virtues were those which Rome had cultivated of old. During the second century A. D., the Stoic ideal of kingship was exemplified in the lives of the five Good Emperors. According to this ideal the emperors were the first servants of the state, chosen because of their fitness and training for the work which they had to do. In his *Meditations*, a little volume still popular today, Marcus Aurelius, the last emperor of this line, left to posterity his comments on Stoic morality. In the light of these influences of Stoicism upon Roman thought it is not surprising to find that the institutions of the Roman Empire, especially Roman law, were imbued with Stoic ideals. The doctrine of natural law and natural right, as written into Roman law by Stoic lawyers, has been preserved to our time; it is embodied in such documents



as the American Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Since the Romans as a people were not philosophically inclined, scientific studies played little part in their education. Roman education followed Greek models; but in the development of the curriculum, as in other things, Rome modified and adapted the technique learned from the Greeks. Since the chief business of a Roman was government, whether at Rome as magistrate or senator, or in the provinces as a commander of troops and administrator of justice, the Roman curriculum aimed at preparation for public life. Boys should learn how to speak and to write; hence they were taught language, both Greek and Latin—a study that included grammar, rhetoric, and literature, supplemented by dialectics or logic. During the period of the Empire, schools became widespread; in the West, those of Gaul were famous at the time when the barbarian tribes were overrunning the frontiers. These schools continued for generations to follow the old traditions of education; out of their curricula grew the standard education of the Middle Ages.

### ROMAN ARCHITECTURE AND ART

The Romans possessed orderly and logical minds. To this fact may be ascribed their preëminence in law; to it also may be ascribed the essential qualities of their architectural achievements. The towns which they laid out—some of which still stand in the Sahara as deserted monuments of the prosperity which Roman engineers brought to northern Africa—had straight, well-paved streets, and broad market places surrounded by shops and public buildings. They would be a credit to any age. The Romans were practical builders. They built for use and permanence—aqueducts, baths, temples, and public buildings. During the days of the Empire, Rome's water supply was better than it has been at any time since, except possibly in very recent years. Athens, until a short time ago, depended for her water almost exclusively upon an aqueduct built by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. It is obvious, too, that the Romans took delight in the great size of

the structures they erected. In this respect we in America resemble them. Possibly we resemble them also in laying greater emphasis upon engineering than upon architecture.

The Greeks influenced Roman building at all times: Roman temples, like the Greek, were rectangular in shape; Roman columns were of the ornate Corinthian order. But the Romans used round arches and vaults more freely than did the Greeks, and they used brick, tiles, and concrete in place of stone. The marble Rome, of which Augustus is said to have boasted, was really a brick core covered with marble facing. This is typical of Roman work—ornament was applied to buildings; it was not an integral part of their structure. Yet Rome has always been a school for architects. Its basilicas, with central naves and lower aisles, became the model for early churches. Its vaulted buildings were the inspiration of the Romanesque churches, and from them descended the Gothic cathedrals. Byzantine architecture owes much to Rome; and Renaissance Europe was charmed by the simplicity of the Roman buildings which had survived.

Great builders are ordinarily not great artists, and the Romans were no exception to this rule. They owed much to the Greeks, in art as in other fields, and doubtless much of Roman art was produced by Greeks. There is no doubt, however, about Roman appreciation of Greek art, for the museums are filled with Roman copies of Greek sculpture found on Italian soil, and ancient records tell of the immense number of Greek statues taken by Roman generals and emperors to adorn their Italian palaces. But Roman sculpture was not Greek. It possessed qualities which were characteristic of Rome's greatness. One of its qualities was realism, a realism which makes the busts of Roman generals and emperors almost live again for us. This is apparent in the reliefs on the triumphal arches, and particularly those on the Column of Trajan, which give a pictorial record of that emperor's Dacian Wars. There is a dignity in Roman work, so well illustrated in the reliefs on the Augustan Altar of Peace. We see Roman family pride and affection, calm and restrained. When the Romans turned to symbolism, the same calm re-

straint is apparent, as may be seen in a relief which represents the Goddess Rome surrounded by the blessings which Roman peace had brought to the world.

### ROMAN LITERATURE

Great as was the literary debt of Rome to Greece, still in the field of literature, as in art, the Romans impressed their own personality upon what they borrowed. In the closing years of the Republic, Catullus, schooled in Hellenistic verse, wrote love poetry so genuine and so beautiful as to give Rome a place in literature. Cicero's orations, letters, and essays are expressions of Rome's spirit, as it appeared in the courts, the forum, the Senate, and the lives of educated Romans who were conscious of their Roman birth and traditions even when most under the influence of Greek civilization. For pure literary objectivity, Caesar's account of his Gallic campaigns is hard to equal. These men made the Latin language a serviceable medium for the writers of the Augustan Age.

To the age of Augustus belongs Virgil, the poet who again gave to epic poetry the breath of life. His *Aeneid* is not a mere feeble imitation of Homer; it is a glorification of Rome and of the Julian family. Aeneas is typical of Roman manhood, devoted to the memory of his ancestors, and loyal to the commands of duty. Rome called, and the citizen served. Livy's prose history was as much an object lesson in Roman virtues as it was an historic account of Rome's past. In the poems of Horace we see a Roman gentleman, polished and urbane, fond of ease, and possessed of so much humor that the casual reader may easily receive the impression that it was hard for him to take life seriously; yet underneath this exterior we can distinguish the deep religious feeling of the Roman peasant, his love for the soil, his longing for peace, and his loyalty to the man who had ended the war.

Of the writers of the Empire we can mention only a few: Juvenal, in whose hand satire, a peculiarly Roman literary form, was perfected; Tacitus, whose historical writings show us the early Roman emperors; the African Apuleius, in whose



romantic tales Oriental influence becomes dominant; and the Church Fathers, whose theological writings lead straight to the Middle Ages. Latin remained a living tongue for centuries, and the influence of the pagan Latin literature which escaped the fanaticism of the Church cannot be calculated. St. Augustine was ashamed of his fondness for Virgil; but Virgil lived to become both a Christian prophet and a magician. In the Middle Ages his books were a favorite means of ascertaining the future. A German nun wrote plays in imitation of Terence; and when Italy became interested again in her pagan past, the Italian humanists were prouder of their ability to imitate the prose of Cicero or the poetry of Virgil than of their Italian works, which have made them famous.

The numerous contributions of Rome to modern civilization have been specifically mentioned in the course of this chapter. It is not necessary to repeat them here. Every important phase of Roman culture has left some mark upon the modern world. In politics and law, religion, economic life, education, philosophy, literature, architecture, and other phases of art we are indebted to ancient Rome. The whole can be summed up in a sentence: Rome acted as a medium by which her own civilization, the philosophy, science, and art of the Greeks, and the varied cultures of the East, including Christianity, were passed on to the West, and thence to us, by direct descent through the Middle Ages and by imitation during the Renaissance. (For summary of Roman civilization see Appendix, p. 1039.)

### THE TRANSITION TO THE MIDDLE AGES

In the fifth century A. D., Rome became the prize of Teutonic invaders; the splendid civilization described in these pages passes, and the story of Western civilization begins a new chapter dealing with a culture strikingly different from that of imperial Rome. A few generations ago historians were still emphasizing the contrast by characterizing the Middle Ages as the "Dark Ages," as if to suggest that European



Top: The Colosseum in Rome, dedicated by Titus in the year 80 A. D. The amphitheater seated fifty thousand people. Center left: The Pantheon in Rome, temple of all the gods, as it appears today. Center right: Bas-reliefs with historical subjects are often found in Roman sculpture. A typical Roman monument of this kind of early imperial times is the *Ara Pacis Augustae*. The detail reproduced here shows a procession. Lower picture: A great Roman road, the Appian Way, as it appears today. This road connected with a road leading to Gaul, and along this way the victorious Roman armies returned. (Photos, courtesy of the ENIT.)





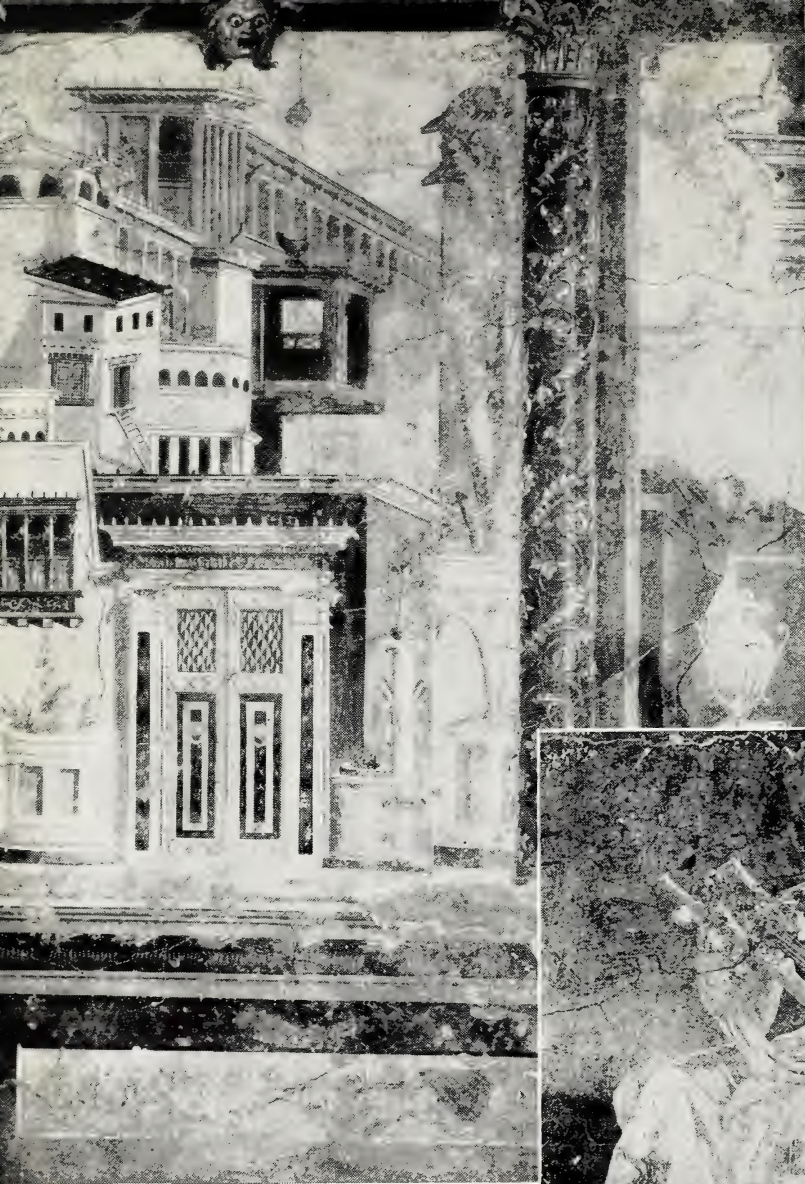
The Romans carried their culture to the far ends of their great empire. The illustrations on these pages show some of the evidences that have survived the centuries. The pictures across the top are: (1) The Pont du Gard in Nîmes, France. It is 900 feet in length and part of an original twenty-five-mile long aqueduct built in 19 B. C. The stones were laid dry, without mortar. They were fitted so closely and with so little space left between them that they could not fall. (2) The Alameda of Hercules, a Roman public walk in Seville, Spain. (3) The Roman Baths at Nîmes.





The lower pictures are: (1) The Newport Arch in Lincoln, England, one of the two Roman arches that remain in Great Britain. (Courtesy of the Associated British and Irish Railways, Inc.) (2) Bas-reliefs on the Arch of Septimius Severus in Leptis Magna, an ancient Roman seaport in Northern Africa. (Courtesy of the ENIT.) (3) The Porta Nigra, or Black Gate, in Trier, Germany, built by the Romans as part of their fortifications of the town. (Courtesy of the German Railroads Information Office.)





Frescoes from a Roman country villa in Boscoreale on the south slope of Vesuvius (1st century B. C.). Boscoreale was destroyed along with Pompeii. The upper picture shows a wall of a cubiculum, or bedroom, on which is painted a view of buildings as they appeared at that time, with colonnades, balconies, and porticoes. The lower fresco depicts a lady sitting in an elaborate armchair and playing a cithara, an ancient musical instrument similar to the lyre, while a little girl stands behind her. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

society had suddenly passed from the light into darkness and stagnation. Historical research has revealed the falsity of that conception of medieval civilization; nevertheless, the marked decline after the fifth century calls for some explanation, however inadequate it must be in the brief space that can be allotted to it here.

### **The barbarian invasions**

We have seen that groups of Aryans made their way in very early times into the Near East, into the Greek world, and into Italy, where they played a conspicuous part in the building of the civilizations of those lands. The invading Teutons of the fifth century A. D. were also a branch of the Indo-European peoples. They belonged to the Nordic race and were the direct ancestors of the Scandinavians, Danes, Germans, Austrians, and Dutch of our own time; much Teutonic blood also runs in the veins of the English, the Flemish, and the Swiss. Physically, these newcomers contrasted sharply with the shorter and darker Mediterranean stock. They were powerfully built, tall, fair-haired, and blue-eyed.

Their homeland has been a matter of some dispute. It is probable that they once occupied the region about the southern end of the Baltic, and from there moved toward the southwest and the southeast. As early as the second century A. D. they began to threaten the Roman Empire. From time to time thousands were admitted across the Rhine-Danube frontier, to become soldiers in the Roman legions; in the course of time they were assimilated and lost their German identity. In the fourth century, the Teutons, driven hard against the Roman frontier by a fierce Asiatic people, the Huns, were permitted to cross the Danube in large numbers. From then on, successive waves of Teutonic peoples overflowed the Empire and, in the fifth century, put an end to the Empire in the West.

The barbarian invasions were an important factor in the setback of civilization after the fifth century, but they alone do not account for the change. It is to be emphasized that in their conquests they encountered a civilization already dis-



integrating and added their influence to hasten its decline. In fact, it would seem that the conquest of the mighty Roman empire by disunited tribes of barbarians to the number only of several hundred thousand hardly becomes intelligible unless it is understood that Roman civilization had been declining in vigor and strength for a long period before the Teutonic invaders overran the Empire. The forces of decadence became increasingly effective in several aspects of Roman life in the period following the first century of the Empire. Some of the signs of decline can merely be mentioned here.

The economic foundations of the Empire were being sapped by a combination of several forces. One was the decline in population resulting in part from long periods of war and in part from a declining birth rate. A conspicuous falling off in the birth rate among the wealthy classes alarmed the government in the early years of the Empire; in the last years a similar decline was affecting the working classes generally and seriously reducing their numbers. The deficiency was made up by the introduction of German and Slav workers from outside the Empire, whose lack of skill and knowledge led to a fall in production. The demoralization of the labor power was increased by the extensive employment of slave, and later of serf, labor. The free workers came to look upon manual work as degrading and became apathetic and discontented. This situation was aggravated by the practice among many slaveholders of hiring out their surplus slaves to other employers, a practice which brought slaves into competition with free workmen and forced down wages. These conditions in turn affected the fortunes of the higher social classes. As a result of the long-continued fall in the birth rate, many of the old families were dying out. The income of others was reduced by the decline in the productivity of labor, and many were ruined by the heavy burden of taxation laid upon them by a government requiring huge revenues to support an army of officials, to pay military expenses, and to furnish bread and circuses for the masses. The accumulated result of these forces was a marked decline in agriculture and the decay of the smaller industrial towns.

It will be recalled that the trend of government after the establishment of the Empire was toward autocracy. The change had a strong effect on the mental attitude of the classes who had earlier taken an active part in the affairs of their own communities and of the state, for autocracy meant a loss both of political liberty and of freedom of thought. The Empire had come to full circle. Nothing seemed to be left to excite the imagination to fresh achievement. The wealthier classes became apathetic and settled down to a material existence, bent upon a life of Oriental splendor, luxury, and indulgence, under the influence of which the sterling virtues of the old Roman family life were disappearing.<sup>1</sup> It was in part to escape from the deadening effect of this apathy and disillusionment that many turned to the consolation of Christianity.

The degeneracy of Roman civilization was largely reflected in the philosophy, literature, and art of the closing period of the Empire, although impressive achievements in architecture continued almost to the end. Only in one field of literature was there an exception to the general decline in vitality; that was in the realm of the literature of Christianity, which displayed conspicuous growth and vigor, significant perhaps of the coming all-pervasive power of the Church. In education the trend was also downward. In the last century before the invasions school attendance was limited to the wealthy class. Among those who could and did read, the classics of literature were giving place to excerpts, abridgments, and collections of quotations.

When the decisive test came with the invasions of Teutonic peoples, Roman society was unable to marshal the strength and spirit necessary to repel the invaders, and the Western Empire collapsed. What was left after the deluge was the ruins of a great civilization; but, as we shall see, among the ruins there were still solid foundations on which the new civilization of the Middle Ages found a firm resting place.

<sup>1</sup>See M. Rostovtzeff, *A History of the Ancient World*, Vol. II, pp. 363 ff.

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## THE CIVILIZATION OF THE MIDDLE AGES

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**I**N OUR SURVEY of the ancient Mediterranean world we have covered a span of some five thousand years, from the dawn of history to the collapse of Roman civilization in the West in the fifth century A. D. Of this span, the Greeks occupy, roughly, five and a half centuries, counting only to the time when the Greek world fell under the dominion of Rome; while Roman civilization covers somewhat less than a thousand years, if we reckon from the beginnings of Rome's long conquest of Italy. The barbarian invasions and the ruin of Roman civilization, following the overthrow of the last Roman emperor in the West in 476 A. D., constitute a turning point in history. The period which follows, of approximately a thousand years, is called the Middle Ages.

### The Middle Ages and the Renaissance

Where do the Middle Ages end? The answer is not simple. By 1300, and even earlier, medieval culture was undergoing changes so pronounced that students have seen fit to regard the three centuries following, that is, from 1300 to 1600, as a transition to modern times. The interval is called the Renaissance. Somewhere within this interval the medieval period comes to a close; as to just where, there is considerable disagreement. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks, in 1453, has been considered a convenient turning point

by some historians; the discovery of America in 1492, by others; the beginning of the Reformation in 1519, by still others. We shall not attempt to set an arbitrary date, but shall merely state that somewhere between 1300 and 1600 the characteristic features of the Middle Ages fade out sufficiently to justify our saying that the period is at an end. We shall say little of the margin overlapping the Renaissance.

Though we speak of the Renaissance as a transition to modern times, we must not depreciate the contribution of the centuries preceding the fourteenth in the making of modern civilization. Society did not stand still for a thousand years. In a sense the whole period from the fifth to the seventeenth century might be regarded as a transition to the modern age. But during a considerable part of that time European society might be thought of as passing through a new period of its nonage, when the barbarism of the Teutonic invaders and the decadence of the Roman population combined to incapacitate men for a full appreciation or utilization of the fruits of the Greco-Roman-Oriental culture. Only after a long interval of probation and preparation did society reach that full stature in experience and intellectual equipment which enabled it at last to turn a comprehending and appreciative eye upon the splendid achievements of the past and to appropriate them to its use and advancement. That probation did not begin with the fourteenth century; it was a cumulative experience slowly generating the energy which was to manifest itself in achievement during the Renaissance. (For the chronology of the Middle Ages see Table II, pp. 304-305.)

### **The medieval world**

The geographical limits of the medieval world were not constant. They advanced as the civilizing forces of the Mediterranean world penetrated ever deeper into the regions surrounding it. It is perhaps defensible to identify medieval civilization with Christendom, for the Christian Church furnished the machinery, the energy, and the zeal by which medieval civilization was spread. But Christian civilization once established did not everywhere maintain itself. A militant



Mohammedanism, coming out of the East, drove deep wedges in Christendom and established lasting enclaves of Oriental culture, which we are forced to include as disturbing but vitalizing areas in the medieval world. Thus our medieval map presents contrasting shades of culture, the Christian and the Mohammedan.

We shall follow the dominant currents of Christianity first. By the close of the sixth century, Christendom was practically identical with the Roman Empire at its height. The fringe of the Sahara was the southern limit of the Christian world. To the north the Rhine, the Danube, and the Black Sea formed a natural boundary. At the extreme east, the boundary slanted diagonally southwestward from the western shores of the Caspian to the upper waters of the Red Sea. In the continental West, the Atlantic was the natural frontier. In the British Isles Christianity had triumphed where the Roman legions had failed, and Scotland, Ireland, the extreme western part of England, and Wales had been won; only in eastern and central England had paganism temporarily driven Christianity back with the conquests of the still unconverted Angles and Saxons. By the beginning of the ninth century Christianity had crossed the Rhine and the Danube and penetrated as far northeastward as the river Elbe, and the whole of the British Isles was Christian. By the close of the thirteenth century practically all of Europe had fallen under the sway of the Greek or the Roman cross; only in northeastern Russia, northern Finland, and the extreme north of the Scandinavian Peninsula were the peoples of Europe still outside the pale of Christianity.

In the meantime, Christianity had retreated in the East and in southwestern Europe before the advancing forces of Mohammedanism. In the Near East this new religion had arisen in the hitherto stagnant society of the Arabs. Like an electric shock it galvanized the Arabian tribes into thought and action. In the seventh century Mohammedanism swept over Arabia, Syria, and Persia, thus driving in the eastern frontiers of Christendom. Then, turning westward across northern Africa, it conquered the whole of the Christian land in that

area. In the eighth century Arabs and Berbers crossed into Spain, and before long they had penetrated France as far as the river Loire. There at a notable battle near Tours (732) they were defeated and checked. From then on the retreat of Mohammedanism in the West began, but not until the close of the medieval period were the invaders finally driven from Spain by the Christian forces; in northern Africa, Mohammedanism still remains.

Had it not been for the stout resistance of the Christians in the East, the Arabian tide would have entered Europe in that quarter as well. The danger became more grave in the eleventh century, when a new Mohammedan foe appeared in Asia Minor. The newcomers were the Seljuk Turks, a barbarous Asiatic people, who showed as little appreciation for the Arabian as for the Christian civilization of the East. Before the close of the century they had pushed their conquests to the walls of Constantinople. It was this threat to Christian power that set going a militant Christianity to wage the prolonged conflict known as the Crusades. The Christian dyke held until the fourteenth century, when still more dangerous enemies appeared, namely, the Ottoman Turks, who swept into the Balkan Peninsula, and in the fifteenth century took Constantinople itself, a strategic post which they have held ever since. Mohammedanism had again penetrated Europe.

### THE PEOPLES OF THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

The Arabs exerted an important influence upon medieval culture, as we shall see presently. Just now we are interested in the peoples of the medieval Christian world. Of these, one major group is already well known to us, the medley of peoples who made up the populations of the Roman Empire. It was the newcomers who introduced unknown elements into the social compound and exerted an important influence in forming the new cultural product. Chief among these were the Teutonic peoples who swarmed over the western Roman lands, or remained north and east of the Rhine-Danube frontier to lay the foundations of the Teutonic states. Of others

who played a role in medieval society we shall later give brief consideration to two—the Slavs and the Celts.

### **The Teutonic peoples**

We have already been introduced to the Germanic invaders. Their culture lagged far behind the civilization they helped to destroy. Cut off for centuries from the quickening currents of the Mediterranean civilizations, and living in more or less isolated groups in the northern forests, they had advanced slowly. They had reached the Iron Age and knew the use of metals, but they had no writing. Their culture was essentially like that of other peoples of the same stage of advancement. They lived in small villages; they herded, hunted, and practiced some simple agriculture. They had their vices: they were much given to quarreling, gambling, and sloth. They had their virtues too: they were brave in war, placed a high value upon truth and loyalty, and possessed a passion for liberty. Politically they had not advanced beyond a tribal organization; their law was local custom. Of art, science, and philosophy they knew nothing in the Greek or Roman sense.

For several centuries subsequent to the fall of Rome the Mediterranean area was disturbed and terrorized at intervals by raiding or migrating bands of Teutons coming from still farther north—from the Danish or the Scandinavian peninsula. Thus there was a new setback to the development of civilization in the regions affected. These marauders from the North also took to the sea: they settled in Normandy; they established themselves in England and Ireland. When the Teutons turned at length from pillage and war to the settled pursuits of peace they made notable contributions to the civilization of Europe.

### **Effect of the Latin culture on the Teutons**

The influx of Germanic peoples did not destroy completely the continuity of Roman civilization. The invaders clung to many of their customs locally; but they were unable to give a Teutonic cast to the lands they invaded, and ultimately they amalgamated with the Latin populations and lost their iden-



tity, except as here and there the physical characteristics of the Nordic crop out in Mediterranean lands; Latin culture, though weakened and barbarized, predominated. The Latin influence was strongest in Italy. Here the Latin language persisted, corrupted into Italian; Roman law, education, literature, and many Roman economic practices held as by a thread in some cases, but did not give way. In the Roman provinces, where we should expect Latin culture to be less potent, much of the old survived. In France, for example, despite the great influx of Germans, it was a Romance, and not a German, tongue that evolved. Roman Christianity, Roman laws, and Roman institutions and customs continued to dominate. Here the ultimate result, as one authority has expressed it, was neither German nor altogether Latin, but a culture which was later to be styled French. In Spain, results were similar.

The history of the Germanic tribes that remained north of the Roman frontier was quite different. The German lands to the north had never been conquered. Augustus had once tried to push the Roman frontier to the Elbe, but had failed. Thus the Latinizing of the northern peoples had never been effected. The German culture remained essentially German; the language remained German. Similar was the situation in the British Isles. A portion of the Islands—what was later to be England—was, to be sure, conquered by Rome, and the population was to a degree Latinized; but with the invasions of the Anglo-Saxons in the fifth century the Roman culture was virtually wiped out, and England was free to build her culture in the English mold and in the English spirit.

### **The Slavs**

The Slavic groups constituted another element in the medieval world. Slavic blood predominates among the populations of Russia, Poland, what was till recently Czechoslovakia, and the Balkan countries outside Greece. These, too, are a branch of the Indo-European peoples, but racially they differ from the Teutons and the Celts, being mainly Alpine. Vast in numbers, the Slavs were for the most part too far removed from the Mediterranean area to advance as fast as peoples

farther south, and they played a less important part during the medieval period.

### **The Celts**

The Celts were a smaller group. They were the ancestors of many of the Irish, Scotch, and Welsh, and of the inhabitants of Brittany in France. They represent still another branch of the Indo-European family, similar to the Teutons in racial characteristics and probably related to them. Despite their limited number, they possessed qualities that enabled them to play a conspicuous part in history, both in the medieval and in the modern period.

## **THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AS A FACTOR IN MEDIEVAL CULTURE**

Such were the peoples who made up the populations of the medieval world, save in the Greek lands of the southeast, which can be more conveniently treated later. Just now our attention shifts to the problem of examining the chief forces which were to stamp a peculiar and distinctive character upon the civilization of the Middle Ages. The Roman Church was such a force. Of the religious function of the Church we shall have little to say in this chapter, since the subject will be treated in detail later.<sup>1</sup> Here we are more interested in the Church as a medium of civilization in aspects mainly other than religious.

The Christian Church dominated medieval society as no other institution did. It was the one institution in the Roman structure that stood intact against the disintegrating influences of a decadent Roman society and the tide of barbarian invasion. It came to absorb to a remarkable degree the interests of the Roman people, as their earlier interests and activities weakened and disappeared with the decay of earlier Roman institutions. In other words, the Church came to fill a void that was created when the rich and active life of the old Roman world receded from men's experience. The collapse of the Roman Empire in the West, the resulting disappearance

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 29.

of old landmarks, the miseries and perplexities attending the barbarian invasions—all tended to heighten the influence of the Church, picturing, as it did, a release from a painful earthly existence and the gaining of an everlasting happiness in a paradise beyond the grave. This power the Church wielded, to be sure, by virtue of its unique position as the sole instrumentality whereby man might assure himself of salvation. But, as we shall see presently, the influence of the Church was not religious alone; it made its presence felt decisively in all the important activities of medieval society, temporal as well as spiritual.

### **Roman influence on the Church organization**

The effectiveness of the Church in the exercise of its power is to be explained partly by the remarkable organization which it built up. Under the guiding genius of the Romans for government and administration, Christendom took on something of the face and feature of the Roman Empire itself. No longer able to find expression for that genius in the service of the Roman state, men sought an outlet in the service of the Church which had arisen on the foundations of the Empire and which, in some respects, preserved the continuity of the Empire in the medieval world. The Roman conception of a universal state extending its beneficent rule to all men gave place to the Christian conception of a universal brotherhood of man joined together by the bonds of Mother Church. Rome sought to give to society the worldly gifts of law, order, and peace; the Church sought a spiritual goal—the disciplining of man in righteous living as a preparation for eternal life.

The historical linking of the medieval church with Roman civilization is indicated in numerous particulars. Rome, the Eternal City, center and capital of the Roman world, was fittingly made the center and capital of the Christian world—God's kingdom on earth, the earthly expression of the eternal kingdom of heaven. The Emperor, autocrat of all the Romans, gave way to the Roman pontiff or Pope, autocrat of all the Christians in the West. The Roman law, which had bound all citizens of the Roman world, was



modified and appropriated to the use of the Church to bind the populations of Christendom. It was now *canon* law, and was administered by the clergy in the courts of the Church. The Latin language, which had made a conquest of the whole Empire, save in some eastern parts, where Greek persisted, became the universal official language of the Roman Catholic Church. After the adoption of Christianity as the state religion of Rome in the fourth century, the administrative system of the Church had been deliberately coördinated with the administrative system of the Empire—almost completely so in the East, not so fully in the West. Part of that system the medieval Church retained in the East; particularly was this true of the Roman municipality, which the Church found admirably adapted to the administrative purposes of the diocese. Here the bishop, the most important administrative officer, established his official residence; the cathedral church was the bishop's church, and only those municipalities that contained cathedrals were called cities. Finally, Rome had used the sword to extend her power. Lay members of the Church used the same weapon in the initial process of converting pagans into Christians, and the militant Church itself sometimes used armies for its purposes. The real legions of the Church, however, were certain monastic orders. These used no lethal weapons, but with tremendous missionary zeal they waged unceasing war against paganism.

#### **Roman culture preserved by the Church**

From the foregoing it is evident that certain elements of Roman culture were woven into the very fabric of the Church. Those elements continued to live in the body of the institution, and the Church carried them wherever it established itself as an influence upon the community. This point is worth closer examination. The conception of a universal Church helped to preserve the Roman idea of a universal empire as the political counterpart of the universal Church; and that idea, as we shall see, exerted a profound influence upon the political history of Europe during medieval and modern times. So far as the Catholics of the world are concerned, the ideal of

a world-wide brotherhood has never lost its force. It cannot be said that Roman law would have been lost to the world had the Church not preserved some of its principles in the canon law, but it can truly be said that the universal use of the canon law throughout Christendom promoted study of the Roman law and familiarity with its administration, until a later recovery of the Justinian Code gave Europe a deeper and more accurate understanding of it.

Again it was the Church which carried the Latin language throughout western Europe and kept it alive as the universal language of the scholar during the Middle Ages; and it was Latin, along with Greek, which was the key to unlock the hidden treasures of the older classical cultures when Europe intellectually awoke to their merit in the closing centuries of the Middle Ages. This credit belongs to the Church even though it became necessary for scholars of a later period to purge the Latin of impurities before it could again become an effective instrument. Classical literature, science, and philosophy were likewise preserved by churchmen; in fragments, to be sure, and sometimes distorted by the all-pervading influence of theology; nevertheless, the service is not to be completely discounted. Such were some of the most conspicuous elements of Roman culture which the Church passed on to become a part of medieval civilization.

### **The temporal influence of the Church**

It has already been suggested that the Church became involved in all of the important activities of medieval life. The situation came about, at least in the beginning, more by accident than by design. As *Pontifex Maximus* the Roman emperor exercised authority over the church. In the exercise of his powers the emperor did not always discriminate between civil and spiritual service; members of the clergy were sometimes called to officiate in the courts and to perform other lay services. With the collapse of government after the barbarian invasions, more and more of the functions of government fell from the weakening hands of the state and were from time to time taken up by the Church. The Church kept

the courts alive, acted as mediators between the victorious invaders and Rome, and even raised armies in defense of the Empire. Thus in a disintegrating society the Church stepped into the breach, and became deeply involved with the temporal affairs of the people.

The Church was a political as well as a religious institution. The Pope was not merely the head of the religious world of the West; he became the lay head of the states of the Church in central Italy, which he ruled like any other prince. In the beginning the Church had adhered to the ideal of a Church independent of the state. Later it came to assert, on the analogy of the superiority of the spiritual over the temporal, the supremacy of the Church over the State. According to that theory princes were subject to the Pope and accountable to him as trustees for the just rule of their subjects. The Pope asserted the right to decide in controversies between princes, and did so decide on a number of occasions. He asserted, also, the right to absolve the subjects of princes from obedience, or even to depose princes, as disciplinary measures. It was the actual exercise of authority in these matters that led to a long and bitter struggle between Church and State during the Middle Ages.

The temporal authority of the Church exhibited itself in other ways. It had come into possession of from one-fourth to one-third of the occupied land of western Europe. These lands were a source of wealth to the Church. They were held to be exempt from taxation by the prince within whose dominion the lands lay, except as the clergy granted free gifts to him. At the same time the Church enjoyed the privilege of levying taxes upon the faithful throughout Christendom. Church revenues were used to support the administrative system and to maintain the magnificent papal establishment in Rome. To its power to tax must be added its authority in the administration of the canon law. Into the ecclesiastical courts were drawn not only questions of religion but what we should call civil cases as well—cases growing out of usury, litigation over sworn contracts, the probating of wills, questions of divorce, and the like. The clergy were themselves privileged



to be tried only in the courts of the Church, where penalties were comparatively light. And we must not overlook the great influence which churchmen frequently possessed in the councils of ruling princes, who chose them for high places largely because they were the only educated class available until the later Middle Ages.

### **The influence of the monks**

Finally, the work of the monks and the friars in promoting the advance of culture should be considered. The ascetic ideal of medieval Christianity—the idea that man might best promote the spiritual life by withdrawal from a sinful and corrupting world—led to the development of the monastic system. Beginning in the eastern half of the Roman Empire in the third century, the monastic system had penetrated the whole empire before the close of the fourth century. Often enough the monks grew soft, indolent, and worldly; but at their best the monasteries became vitalizing centers of industry. One English writer has called them “Christian industrial colonies.” Because hard labor tested religious zeal and disciplined the flesh, the monks frequently chose unpromising situations for their establishments. They drained swamps, cleared the land, and laid out fields, gardens, orchards, and vineyards. In the art of agriculture they were the furthest advanced of all, and they taught their improved methods to the peasants about them. They were likewise advanced in industry and did much to preserve mechanical skills which might easily have been lost to the medieval world. In an age when communities were well-nigh isolated, they built roads and repaired bridges. As the only hostelries of the time, the monasteries entertained the travelers passing about Europe and became clearing houses for gossip and news, and thus fostered the exchange of ideas.

Also important as a civilizing force was the intellectual labor of the monks. But for their industry in copying manuscripts, many a document of priceless value to later historians and much of classical literature would have been lost. In education, too, the influence of the monks was decisive. In

the last centuries of the Roman Empire schools were established in all the larger municipalities, but with the invasions they largely disappeared in the West, and schools might well have passed from men's memories had not the Church added to its other services the function of education. In this field the monasteries were among the most important centers. In the seventh and eighth centuries, when churchmen sought to provide textbooks for the purpose, it is interesting to notice that they turned to the Roman models; the "seven liberal arts" came to comprise the materials for the educational process: the *trivium*, consisting of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic or logic; and the *quadrivium*, consisting of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music—then itself a form of mathematical study. What the monks preserved in these fields was meager enough, and it was still more meager as compared with the Greek conception of the "liberal arts," yet it was immensely better than nothing. The monks were truly the schoolmasters of Europe during the ages that may, at least comparatively speaking, be described as "dark ages."

It is well, too, to remember what has already been suggested, that the monks—particularly the mendicant monks, called friars—were the soldiers of the Church, ever widening the frontiers of Christendom. Wherever they established themselves, the influences noted above were borne in upon the surrounding peoples. Monasticism "was a constant proclamation, in the midst of a barbarous and crude and warlike society, of the duty and glory of another sort of life, of the virtues of peace and self-sacrifice and poverty and labor. It was a perpetual reminder that some things supremely worth having were not to be gained by strife or self-assertion or pride of place, but that passive virtues and gentle lives might be full of power."<sup>1</sup>

### A summary evaluation

This brief description of the extensive powers of the Church, the splendid machinery which it created and maintained for

<sup>1</sup>George B. Adams, *Civilization during the Middle Ages* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), pp. 131-132.

the exercise of these powers, and its numerous points of contact with medieval society should make clear the commanding position which it enjoyed. It had many faults, and its influence was not always good; but when the debits and credits of its account are summed up, the fact remains that it was the greatest single force in the advancement of civilization in the medieval world. In a disorderly and brutal age it represented order, discipline, and humanity. Authority, respect for authority, and obedience were implicit in the organization itself; and it taught these lessons unceasingly by precept and by example. It stood ordinarily by the side of ruling princes to lend strength to their authority and to inculcate obedience in their subjects. In a world not yet emerged from barbarism it preserved many of the elements of the civilizations which had gone before. In a period of ignorance it kept burning practically the only lamps of education—narrowly conceived though that education was.

### THE CHRISTIAN EAST: THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

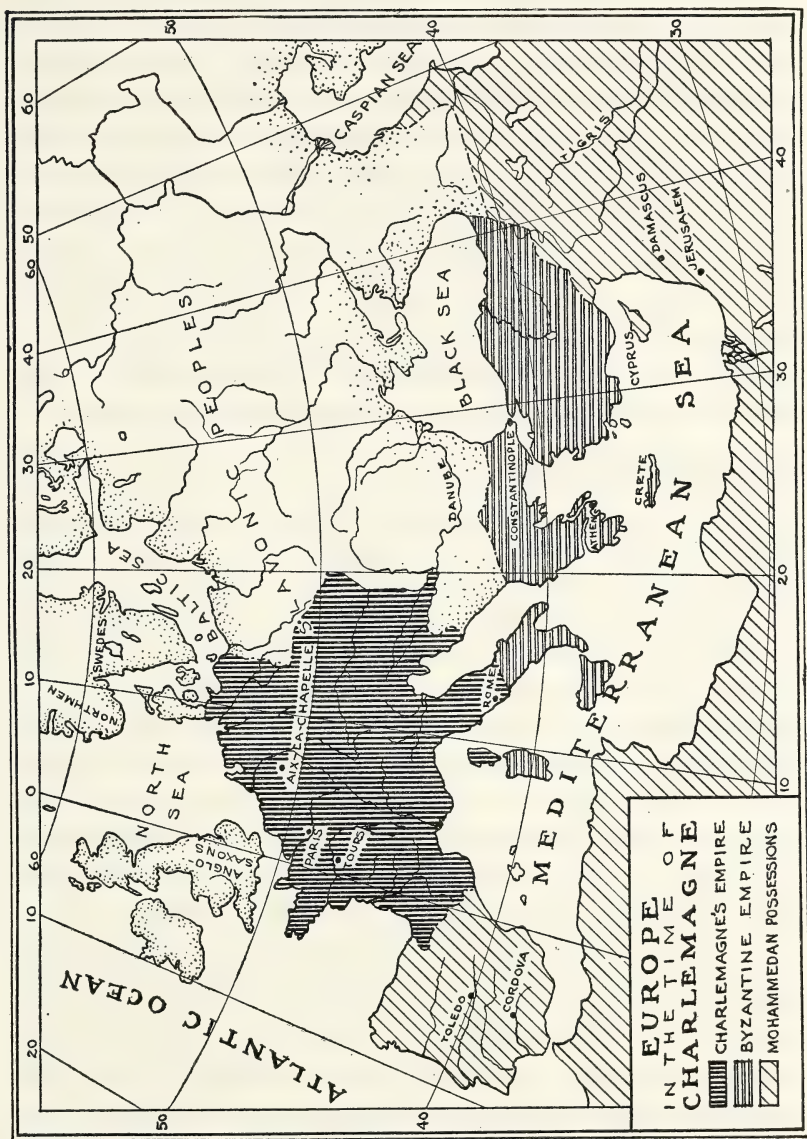
The medieval world may be divided along fairly sharp lines into an eastern and a western half. The latter comprehended roughly Italy, France, Spain, the German lands beyond the Rhine and the Danube, and the British Isles; the former advanced and receded as time went on, but we may get some idea of its geography if we speak of it as that part of the Roman Empire which lay east of the Adriatic. The western portion has received almost exclusive attention, because its significance to medieval and modern civilization bulks decidedly greater. One reason for the difference lies in the fact that the eastern half represents Roman civilization during a protracted period of stagnation, little affected by the Teutonic invasions, which never secured a foothold there. Nevertheless, the Christian East calls for some attention not only because it was an important part of the medieval world but because both the Eastern Empire and the Eastern Church were important forces in the change by which western Europe finally recovered the great ancient cultures.



The gradual separation of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire from the West resulted from an accumulation of influences. When Constantine, the first of the Christian Emperors, moved the capital of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople, in the fourth century, the separation may be said to have begun. The new capital stood on the site of an ancient Greek colony called Byzantium. Quickly it became the dominating center of the Eastern Roman civilization. Language also played a part; the West was Latin or Germanic; the East remained Greek, and Greek ultimately became the official language of the government. Finally, differences in religious belief tended to push the two regions further apart. The upshot of the divergence was that by the eleventh century the schism was complete. The Byzantine emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople refused to recognize the supremacy of the Pope at Rome. The Greek Orthodox Church became a separate and distinct institution in medieval civilization, a fact which had an important influence in shaping the currents of European history.

#### **The character of Byzantine culture**

With the checkered history of the Byzantine Empire we are not concerned. It lasted for nearly a thousand years until, in the fifteenth century, it was overthrown by the Ottoman Turks. What of the contribution of Byzantine culture? We have characterized Byzantine civilization as a continuation, in the eastern half of the Empire, of the declining civilization of Rome. But the Eastern Empire, despite its decadence, maintained a civilization superior, in many respects, to anything in the contemporary West. The elements of its culture were Roman, Greek, and Oriental. Its essential service to the West was that of preserving and passing on valuable features of that culture. The Eastern Empire was an island in which a great civilization of the past found its last refuge from attack by barbarism. There the classical literature continued to be studied, classified, and imitated; there much of Greek science was preserved; there the vast legal learning of the Romans was, under the emperor Justinian, collected and codified.



10. EUROPE IN THE TIME OF CHARLEMAGNE

In some directions culture in the Eastern Empire went beyond what had already been created, particularly in discoveries of new medicines and new methods for the treatment of disease and in the improvement of surgical methods. In architecture, a distinctive style called Byzantine was developed—a style distinguished by the extensive employment of domes, vaults, cupolas, and the lavish use of a highly developed art of mosaic for decorative purposes. The great church of St. Sophia in Constantinople is its most widely known example. In its general effect Byzantine architecture gives the impression of more grace—lighter walls, larger openings, more graceful columns—than does the Roman architecture of the West. In the minor arts the Byzantines displayed highly developed skill and elements of originality, notably in enamel work and jewelry.

#### **Dissemination of Byzantine culture**

These elements of Byzantine culture were carried to the West, generally through the channels of commerce; for the Byzantines, controlling the great commercial gateway at Constantinople, commanded the trade between the Near East and Europe. Along with his merchandise the Byzantine shipped his ideas. Thus western Europe came to be permeated by Eastern influences. Because of their superior skill, artisans of the East were borrowed to teach the industrial arts in the West. Here and there in Italy, Sicily, France, and Spain, churches in the Byzantine style attest the wide influence of the East; and old Venice, long connected commercially with Constantinople, is stamped with an Eastern impress.

To these influences of the Byzantine culture on the medieval world must be added that of the Greek Orthodox Church. This church, like the Roman Catholic, early developed missionary zeal. Its missionaries were particularly active in the Balkans and among the Slavic peoples in Russia. The Bible was translated into the Slavic languages, and Greek churches were set up among the barbarian converts. Thus, as the Roman Church had carried Roman culture to the Germans, the Greek Church carried the culture of the Eastern Empire to the Slavs. The Christians of the East looked to Constantinople,



to the emperor and the patriarch, for guidance, much, though the grip was not so strong, as the Christians of the West looked to Rome. It was this influence of the Greek Church that gave the Slavs an opportunity to play at least a minor part in medieval civilization. The contact established between Constantinople and the North at first stimulated Slavic culture, and in the twelfth century Russia was probably more advanced than Germany; but in the long run the contacts of Rome with the Germanic peoples were more vitalizing and more vigorously sustained than those of Constantinople with the Slavs.

### ARABIC CIVILIZATION AND ITS INFLUENCE

Attention has already been directed to the unwelcome Mohammedan guests who thrust themselves into Christian society—the Turks in the East, and the Moors in Spain. The Byzantine Empire checked these invasions for a time, and no doubt performed a valuable service to Christendom in holding the eastern gate at Constantinople against the Mohammedan power until Europe had gained the strength to prevent a complete Turkish inundation. As it was, the Balkans were overrun, and the Byzantine civilization was depressed, where it was not practically destroyed by the invaders; all southeastern Europe was thus subjected to still another setback, which helps to account for its lagging development. From the time of its establishment down to our own day, the Ottoman Empire in Europe has been a source of disturbance and embarrassment to the Christian nations; it is bound up with some of the most vital problems of European society.

The Mohammedan civilization carried into Spain by the Arabian invaders of the eighth century was very different from that of the Ottoman Turks. Arabian civilization towered far above that of the Turks, and in fact was, in many respects, far superior to that of contemporary Christian countries. "While Europe was lost in the darkness of barbarian ignorance, scarcely pierced by a single ray, the capitals of Islamism were flooded with a great light of literature, philosophy, arts, and industry." As in the case of other societies we have

studied, the Arabs borrowed much of their civilization from other peoples, from the Persians and the Greeks and from the peoples of India. But much of what they borrowed they stamped with their own character, and in notable cases they made original contributions.

In communication or actual contact with the Greek culture of the Near East, the Arabs developed some appreciation of the Greek intellect. They borrowed largely from the Greek philosophers; Aristotle, in fact, was revealed to medieval Europe more through the Arabian influence than through any other. From the Greeks, too, they borrowed a knowledge of medicine and surgery, but they pushed the horizon of medical science beyond that of the Greeks. Their hospital service, particularly for the insane, far surpassed that of the Christians. They studied chemistry as alchemy, but in the process they "discovered new elements and produced new and valuable compounds, such as potash, alcohol, corrosive sublimate, sulphate of silver, and nitric and sulphuric acid." They were advanced in geographical knowledge; they accepted the rotundity of the earth, and are said to have taught geography from globes. In mathematics they were particularly apt. Algebra is one of their contributions to the world. A treatise on this subject written by an Arab in the ninth century served as a textbook for Europe until the beginning of the modern period. They produced a notable literature in both poetry and prose. The delightful *Thousand and One Nights* or *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* has become a classic in the field of literature. To architecture they gave a sufficient impress of their own spirit to produce a striking style. Their mosques and palaces are characterized by domes and graceful minarets, round or horseshoe arches, and decorative arabesques distinguished by geometrical design and a pleasing combination of color. On Arabian painting and sculpture the Mohammedan religion laid a cold hand by its prohibition of the depicting of living things.

As one might well surmise, these intellectual accomplishments were sustained by an advanced material civilization. The Arabians excelled in agriculture; they understood the art

of irrigation, used fertilizers, introduced new products. They were highly skilled in the making of metal and leather goods, and in weaving. They established an extensive trade, and for a long period were the middlemen who carried Oriental goods from the far interior to the ports of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, to be conveyed thence by European traders for Western consumption.

Despite its accomplishments, Arabic civilization was short-lived. It reached its peak early in the ninth century, and in the same century began to decline. Its essential contribution, so far as Europe was concerned, was that of conserving and passing on what it had borrowed and what it had created to a more vigorous people with a fairer opportunity not only to maintain its cultural gains but to go forward. Not until the later centuries of the Middle Ages was Europe in a position to discover the debt which it owed to the Arabians; then it was revealed how many of the Greek treasures were sealed up in the Arabic writings.

### **SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF MEDIEVAL SOCIETY**

Thus far we have been concerned largely with the ingredients, ethnological and cultural, which entered into the compound called medieval civilization, and with the various means by which these ingredients were brought together and fused to produce that civilization. Having arrived so far we might well pause to view the product in some of its characteristic features. What was the nature of medieval society and of its economic and political activities? What were some of the distinctive culture traits of medieval man that serve to mark his world off from the world of modern times?

#### **General characteristics**

With the passing of the Roman Empire in the West the rich and diversified life of the cities came to an end. Urbanized life had been a dominant characteristic of Roman society. Medieval life was essentially rural. Surveyed in the period before the eleventh century, it presents a picture of innumer-



able small village communities and infrequent towns, in which the vast majority of the people of Europe gained a simple, frugal existence by means of a rude form of agriculture, each community more or less isolated from the outside world, subsisting almost wholly on its own products. Manufacture held a secondary place. It was largely unspecialized, and was carried on in the huts of the peasantry or in the manor house or castle of the landlord. Of trade there was comparatively little between villages and towns, and between Europe and the outside world still less. By the eleventh century a change had taken place: town life had strongly established itself; industry had become more and more specialized. A class of town dwellers, the bourgeoisie, had emerged, interested in industry and commerce rather than in agriculture. Thenceforth we find existing side by side the agricultural village life, still carrying on its simple industry as an incidental occupation, and the industrial and commercial life of the towns.<sup>1</sup>

Political interests and institutions were relatively less important in medieval society than they are now, overshadowed as they then were by the Church. Political thought centered largely in the major question involved in the controversy between Church and State—namely, the question as to which was supreme. In political organization the Roman tradition of a world-state powerfully influenced the minds of rulers. The attempt of the Byzantine emperor to extend his authority over the West, the attempts of Charlemagne in the ninth century and of the Holy Roman emperors later, and the political ambitions of the Church to dominate Europe—all are expressions of the great desire to recreate a universal empire. But those attempts all failed to reach the ultimate goal.

The inability of emperors and petty kings to maintain order within and to protect communities from attack from without

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<sup>1</sup>Recent research on this period indicates that industry and commerce were more extensively carried on before the eleventh century than has hitherto been supposed. Consult Alfons Dopsch, *The Economic and Social Foundations of European Civilization* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, and Co., London, 1937, translated from the German edition of 1923-24 by M. G. Beard and Nadine Marshall), particularly Chapter 10. See also Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937), Chap. I.

led to the gradual establishment of feudalism, a form of local government in direct contrast with the centralized universal authority implicit in the imperial idea and system. Under the feudal system Europe presented a confusion of many hundreds of feudal states, large and small, governed almost absolutely by dukes, counts, and barons who made war on each other incessantly and plunged Europe into a state of general disorder. But the feudal lords were not able to maintain their power permanently. It was the towns which first freed themselves from the authority of the feudal nobility and established the right to form their own governments. In the case of towns favorably situated, as in Italy, these rights developed so far as to produce powerful city-states wholly independent of outside authority. But the final death blow to feudalism as a political force came with the rise of the national monarchies in the last centuries of the Middle Ages.

In the preceding sketch three major aspects of social activity appear: the religious, the political, and the economic. They may be thought of as forming a basis for differentiating the salient groups in medieval society, for society regarded as divinely constituted was more or less rigidly stratified into orders or estates: the first estate, a clergy born to pray and save men's souls; the second estate, a nobility born to rule and to fight; the third estate, the mass of mankind, born to labor for the physical maintenance of the higher orders. The two upper estates were privileged; the third was ignoble and unprivileged. Man was born into his privileges. Noble birth stamped upon the individual superior place and authority to be recognized and obeyed by the lower orders who were expected to keep their place and accept the "station to which God had assigned them." Outside of the Church, which did give to merit an opportunity to rise, there was little chance for one to change his social status.

Thus there were in the Middle Ages three separate but related social worlds. First there was the colorful ecclesiastical world with its popes, its archbishops and bishops, its priests and monks, together with a host of others in various clerical positions. Next came the world of the noble-born with its

princes, its ranks of aristocratic landholders, and its knights. The third estate, comprising the great majority of the population, really came to represent two contrasting worlds. There was the original dominant agricultural society with its masses, mainly of serfs, who tilled the land and furnished other rude skills required by the village community; later the development of the towns produced a contrasting society of magistrates, merchants, craftsmen skilled in the industrial arts, common laborers, soldiers, and vagabonds.

When we pass from these concrete phases of medieval society to the more abstract characteristics which differentiate medieval from modern civilization, generalizations become more hazardous. In contrasting one with the other, we must remember that we cannot draw sharp boundaries all along the line. The earlier period merges into the later, and many medieval influences continue to operate in European society down to the present. Nor is it to be forgotten that the generalizations which follow indicate main trends merely; space permitting, one might indicate numerous deviations which became more pronounced as the medieval period neared its close. With this caution we may proceed to notice some other distinguishing aspects of medieval society.

### **Medieval universality**

A sense of unity was given to medieval society by reason of certain universal patterns that ran through medieval life. Our modern world exhibits no such unity. It is partitioned off by national walls. The national state is the political unit; its religion is nationalized; it has a national language, a national literature, national systems of education. In defense of all these things within the walls the national group is bound by powerful emotional ties which we call patriotism. Until the closing period of the Middle Ages, there were no such walls marking off peoples; there were no national states, no traditions of nationalism, no national patriotism. The tradition which influenced medieval society was a tradition of world unity which came straight from Rome. The Church, fashioned after the Empire, was a realization of universality



in the religious life; the Holy Roman Empire, established in the tenth century, and the still earlier empire of Charlemagne were, in some degree, deliberate attempts to realize world unity in political life. Latin was not merely the universal language of the Church, but was everywhere in the West the written language of the educated, and, regarded as eternal, was considered to be the only fit medium for the perpetuation of thought. Education everywhere set up the same goal, dealt with the same subject matter, and used the same language as a medium of instruction. It was this universal pattern stamped on society that gave a sense of unity now lost to the European world.

### **The emphasis on authority**

In medieval society the emphasis was on authority rather than liberty. The commanding position of the Church has been indicated. If we would judge its permeating authority with discrimination, however, we must measure it in its own social setting. The cherishing of liberty may be regarded as a "trait" of modern peoples. Perhaps we are not so free as we imagine. Science, for example, exercises a sort of tyranny over our minds comparable in some respects to the sway of religion in the Middle Ages. But science has no political power to enforce belief in its teachings; whereas the Church had such political power to impose its dogmas. We accept and support science because it appears to serve us; similarly, medieval man accepted and supported religion and the Church because they were the one source of much that was worth while according to the medieval standard of values. This point of view of medieval man must be kept in mind if we would understand the authority enjoyed by the Church. With a conviction of its supreme greatness and importance as the one instrumentality through which man might achieve salvation, and with its roots in the Rome of the Empire—when absolute authority had become the accepted pattern—the Church logically assumed an autocratic position in the medieval world. Man's part, so far as the uninformed masses were concerned, was to believe in order that he might be saved. The unen-

lightened must not question; credulity was a virtue; curiosity was suspect. The Church, representing the one existing body of trained minds, was the keeper of truth; to question its authority was presumptuous and blasphemous. And since the clergy were the only ones competent to interpret the Scriptures, they were given the sole right to perform that function.

In economic and political activity a similar tone—one of subjection to authority—prevailed. Since the vast majority of the population lived in a state of comparative isolation, it was natural that tradition and custom should occupy a place of compelling authority and tend to mold and standardize economic life. Under a fixed routine endlessly repeated there was little opportunity for individual initiative or variation. In political development the trend was toward the exercise of authority from above untempered by the exercise of any effective control by the governed. It is true that the sense of liberty was strong among the Germanic peoples, and that during the feudal period the feudal aristocracy enjoyed liberty to the extent of license, but the feudal aristocracy represented only a small minority of the population; the common man enjoyed no political rights in the modern sense. As national monarchies developed, the tide set in definitely toward absolutism.

### **The subordination of the individual**

The foregoing characterization of society points unmistakably to the subordination of the individual. While great thinkers arose—and distinguished themselves by the individuality of their thought—the general tendency was to stress the deed more than the doer. Monks engaged in constructive tasks or in literary or artistic work frequently did not sign their works, for the glory of the cause was more essential than credit to one's self. Men were like so many atoms in the social compound, not necessarily all molded on one pattern, but each too intrinsic a part of the whole to be conspicuous in his own right. He enjoyed his place in society not as an individual right but because he was a member of the integrated group. Deprived of formal fellowship in the Church, he be-

came an outcast. Outside his appointed place in the village community, existence was virtually denied him in most parts of Europe, for neither land nor protection was to be had. Above the common level of society the medieval man could hardly find a tolerable status outside the feudal system. Outside the medieval guilds, industrial and commercial activity was next to impossible. Thus the spirit of the time was largely coöperative rather than competitive; communistic rather than individualistic. The collective welfare rather than individual welfare was the dominant principle.

### Otherworldliness

The otherworldliness which characterized medieval society offers an additional reason why medieval man was disposed to submit to the directing authority of the Church. The modern mind typically turns to earth and things earthly, but the medieval mind turned characteristically to the other world, to matters of the spirit. This earth literally offered little but drudgery and want to all but a favored few who studied in monasteries or ruled in castles. There was no great goal for medieval man this side of the grave. Man's life on earth was at best but a short sojourn which should be devoted to the spiritual life. Any golden age on this earth had been lost through original sin; what remained was the golden age of a literal heaven. If there was any "progress" worth achieving it was progress towards salvation.

Altogether, we have here the picture of a relatively simple and slowly changing society. In comparison with our own it appears to have been treading perpetually in a circle of custom and tradition. It did move slowly. Everything seemed to conspire to slow up the tempo of its growth. The influx of barbarian peoples was one factor in retarding its advance. Its strong antipathy toward the classical civilizations that preceded it was another, for Christian leadership could not look with an appreciating eye upon the pagan culture of the past. Above all, it is not to be forgotten that its unnumbered village and town communities lived in a state of comparative isolation. Highways and bridges were few, and travel and trade



were slow and beset with many difficulties. Thus were communities cut off from the vitalizing currents that accompany social intercourse over wide areas. The idea of "progress," with which we of today are so obsessed, was alien to the thoughts of medieval society. We accept progressive change as the normal condition of mankind. Such a conception would have deeply puzzled medieval man. With him social stability was to be preserved by maintaining things as they were. Society, as we have seen, was organized on that plan. For so long as the masses of the third estate retained their traditional deference to authority and accepted their subordination as a religious duty imposed by a divine order of society, social stability was assured. Such traditional attitudes were sedulously inculcated in the common man by both political and ecclesiastical authorities.

### MEDIEVAL LITERATURE AND ART

Medieval literature reflects the age that produced it. This is to say that the bulk of it was devoted to theology and related subjects, and that most of it was composed by the clergy. Prose predominated; still a considerable body of poetry in imitation of the classical poets was composed, some of it as early as the ninth century. The medieval writers wrote by hand on parchment. Some of their manuscripts are beautifully illuminated. The language used was medieval Latin.

As national languages developed, however, enthusiasms and interests of a more worldly character found literary expression in subjects drawn from the colorful aspects of the feudal world. The finest examples appeared in France, in Old French. These were the *chansons de geste*, narrative poems detailing the deeds of heroes in the earlier brutal age of feudalism—deeds performed during the wars against the Mohammedans, or in the perpetual conflicts of the feudal barons among themselves. Most famous of all in this period is the *Song of Roland*, a long narrative poem celebrating the valor of Roland, a hero of Charlemagne's court. Later appear in western Europe the romances of chivalry, reflecting the softened manners and





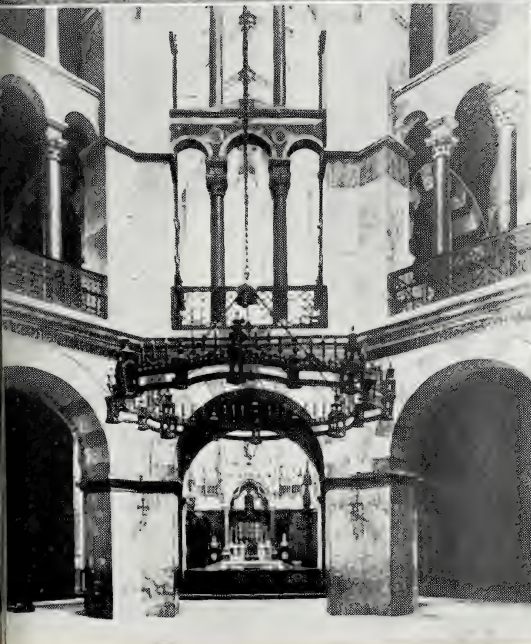
At the top left is a fragment of a gilt glass bowl showing Christ crowning St. Peter and St. Paul (made in Rome about 350 A. D.), and next to it an ivory box for holding mass wafers (about 6th century), both examples of early Christian art. The figures in relief on the box represent the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. The two circular dishes at the right are fine examples of Byzantine silversmiths' work of the sixth century. The pair of bracelets (Byzantine, 6th century) are of gold set with pearls and semi-precious stones. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.) The bottom picture, showing the Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian, and her court bearing offerings, is a mosaic from the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy (6th century).





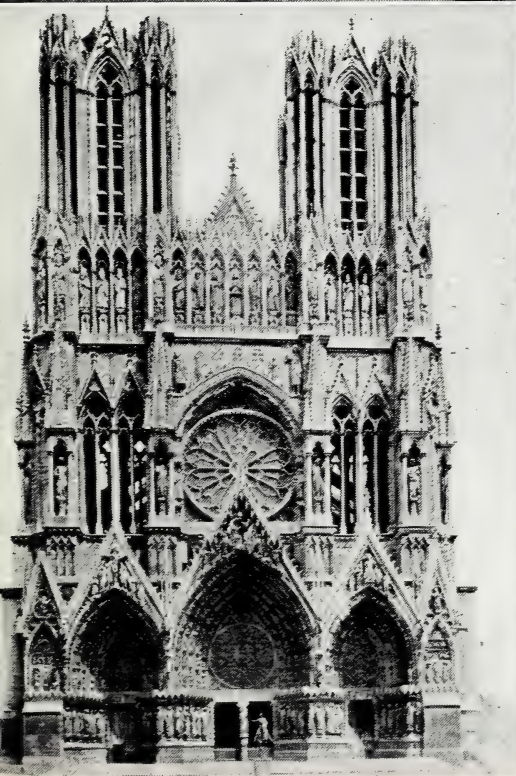
Saint Sophia in Constantinople, begun in 532 A. D. by the Emperor Justinian, is the masterpiece of Byzantine architecture. It was originally a Christian church, then a Mohammedan mosque, and is now a museum of Byzantine art. The interior was one of glorious color—a combination of alabaster, porphyry, marble, ivory, gold, silver, and precious stones. Many of these riches were stolen by the various conquerors of Constantinople. The walls are paneled in veined marble in white, green, rose, and red, and the arches, shown in detail in the upper picture, are so intricately carved that they are literally a lacework in stone.





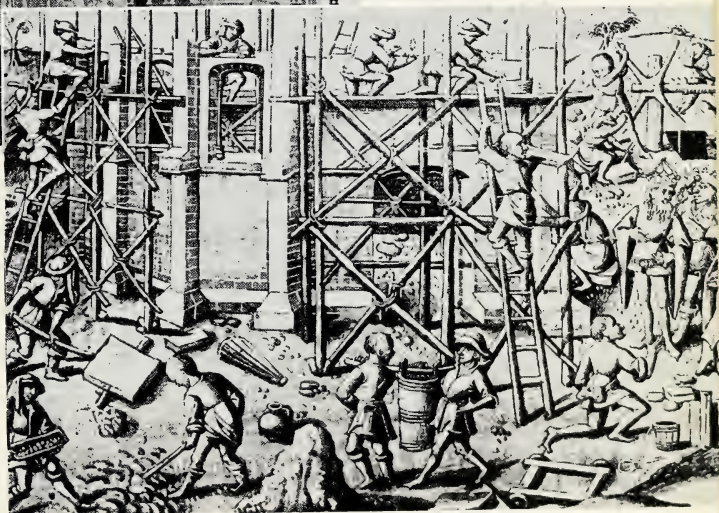
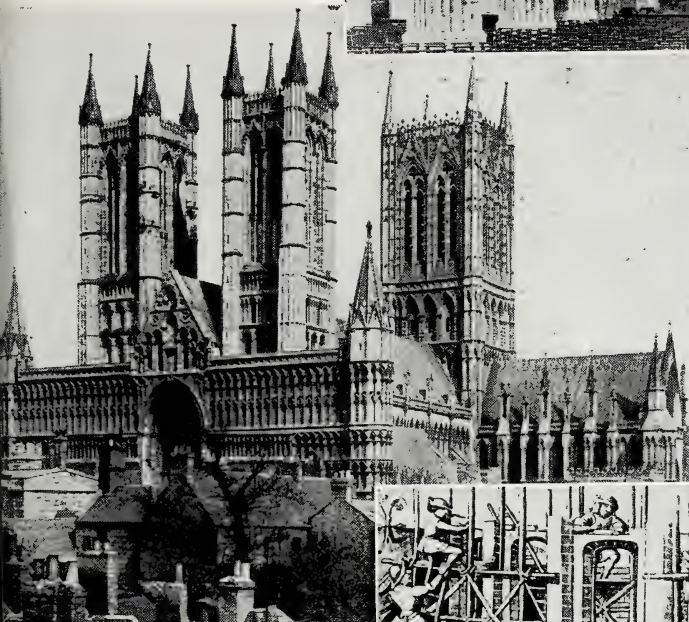
The Great Mosque of Cordova was the center of Mohammedan power in the West. The building of it was begun in 786 and extended into the tenth century. There are nineteen bronze doors leading from the courtyard to the interior (top) which is a labyrinth of brilliantly colored columns of porphyry, jasper, and marble. Below, at the left, is the interior of the chapel of Charlemagne (built 796-804) which is part of the Cathedral of Aachen, Germany. According to tradition, the tomb of Charlemagne is beneath the stone floor. Above it hangs the bronze chandelier presented by Frederick Barbarossa in 1186. (Courtesy of German Railroads Information Office.) At the right is the elaborately carved Romanesque façade of the church of Notre Dame la Grande at Poitiers, France (12th century).





The Gothic pointed arch was used with rhythmical effect in the double rows of columns in the thirteenth-century cloister of La Merveille (top) at Mont St. Michel. The vertical, heaven-soaring lines of the cathedrals of Reims and Amiens (13th-14th centuries) in France express perfectly the aim and ideal of Gothic architecture. The façade of Reims (lower left) is one of the masterpieces of the Middle Ages. It is beautifully proportioned and covered with wonderful statues and detailed stonework. The nave of Amiens (right), with its suggestion of infinite space, is the most beautiful Gothic interior in the world. It is delicate, light, and aspiring, yet soundly constructed.





The English cathedrals are simpler than the French, with emphasis on length rather than on height. The nave of Exeter Cathedral (top), thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, achieves a richness of light and shade by the use of ribbing in piers, arches, and vaults. The photograph of the exterior of Lincoln Cathedral (13th century) gives some idea of the expanse of the English cathedrals. (Photos, courtesy of Associated British and Irish Railways, Inc.) The miniature at the bottom shows the methods employed in building a cathedral.





In medieval times the Great Hall was the main living quarter in a castle, where the occupants ate, danced, and played games, and where beds often were laid for guests. The picture above shows a model of Penhurst Hall in England (1335). At the left the lord and lady sit on a dais under a tall canopy while a page serves them wine from a sideboard. The windows above the dais contained panes of glass, a great luxury in the fourteenth century. At the right is the fireplace, which was placed in the center of the room for greater warmth. The smoke escaped through a hole in the roof. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.) The picture at the left is a detail from an illuminated manuscript (1250), showing a servant on bended knee slicing bread at the lord's table. (Courtesy of The Pierpont Morgan Library.)





The growth of towns led to the use of a type of architecture called half-timber work. The hospital of St. Esprit (1443), Beaune, France (upper left), is a public building in this style. Built around a courtyard, the timber-roofed wards are still used to house the sick. Half-timber work was used in cities in small houses of several stories, such as those in Strasbourg, France (upper right). On the first floor was a shop and on the second floor, which jugged out over the street, was the main living room containing the only fireplace. On the third floor were the bedrooms, and on the top floor a large, well-aired garret for drying laundry. The lower picture is an old print of the Monastery of Cluny, France, which during the eleventh century was the most powerful monastery in all Christendom.





The illustration at the top is a miniature from the *Chronicles of Froissart* showing the battle of Crécy (1346). As in many other military engagements, success in this battle fell to the side having one greatly superior weapon. The English longbow had a far greater range than the crossbow used by the Genoese mercenaries of the French army and could be shot more times per minute. The victory was a decisive one and made England at once a great military power. In the lower picture the commissary department of a medieval army is loading supplies for transport. This illustration comes from an illuminated manuscript of the Old Testament made in the thirteenth century. (Courtesy of The Pierpont Morgan Library.)



courtesy of the period—tales of love and adventure, of the great deeds of the tournament, and of medieval festivals. Much material was drawn from the fabulous tales of Arthur, the Celtic king, and his knights; matter entering into the Arthurian Legend, one of the most famous in European literature. Of the feudal poetry of the Germans, perhaps the finest example is the *Nibelungenlied*, the "Song of the Nibelungs," the basis of Wagner's musical dramas. To the Teutonic contribution should be added the German poems of the Minnesingers and the literature of Norse mythology, some of which appeared in far-off Iceland—the poems called the *Eddas*, and the prose narratives, the *Sagas*.

The Middle Ages enriched Western civilization with an architecture and art devoted to the spirit and the teachings of the Christian religion and designed to keep them forever before the eyes and in the thoughts of the people.

Most impressive of its creations in art was the architecture of church buildings, especially cathedrals. Christianity did not create a distinct style of architecture in its early period. The Christians first made use of the Roman courts of law, the basilicas. About the tenth century they developed a style called the Romanesque, using round arches and vaults and altering the rectangular ground plan of the basilica to the shape of the cross, by the addition of transepts to the nave. In the twelfth century, while the Romanesque still flourished, there appeared in northern France the Gothic style of pointed arches, vaults, and buttresses. It leaped from the ground to soar heavenward in towers and spires, expressing the religious aspiration of the medieval spirit.

In the very structure of the medieval church building, and in services held there, was gathered the rich artistic achievement of the Middle Ages. Few of the people then could read, but here they might see vividly depicted the stories of the Old and the New Testament, the lives of saints and martyrs, the personification of virtues and vices, the terrors of hell and the bliss of heaven. Here, where the people came to find salvation in the sacraments, the power and glory and hope of their religion were made appealing, were made convincing, through

the combined arts of architecture, mosaic, sculpture, painting, stained glass, poetry, drama, music, and illuminated manuscripts—all beautiful in form, full of meaning, and enhanced by the symbolism of vestments, incense, and candles.

Yet so deep was the reaction against the Middle Ages during the Renaissance, that the word "Gothic" became a term of disparagement, as indeed the word "medieval" still is for many people. Prejudice made it so difficult for large numbers of people to see anything good in the Middle Ages that even Gothic cathedrals were regarded as curiosities or monstrosities, interesting perhaps for a certain "strength and roughness," but not beautiful. This blindness lasted until the eighteenth century, when the German poet Goethe wrote an essay announcing his surprise and delight in discovering the beauty of Gothic architecture. Rediscovery of the loveliness of medieval sculpture and painting was slower in coming, because it was so different from the naturalistic work admired since the Renaissance—that is, work which gave pleasure by copying or flattering the natural human shape.

Gradually, sensitive, unprejudiced persons came to see that medieval representation of the human form had dignity and charm; and that its thinness and elongation purposely suggested otherworldliness, and harmonized with the vertical, heaven-soaring lines of the architecture they graced. Art must be judged in terms of the intention behind it. Medieval artists were not trying primarily to represent accurately the human body. A human figure of normal aspect and proportion would not fit in a Gothic niche. But, granting the distortion called for by the requirements and conventions of medieval sculpture, if we allow ourselves to get used to it we may be struck by a certain vitality and naturalness in it after all. Unnatural as the statues on the west front of the Cathedral of Chartres may seem at first, it soon is not hard to understand that they are all portraits; or at least, as Ruskin has said, that they were "studied from some living person whose features might fairly represent those of the king or saint intended."

In other words, once we realize the beauty of a Gothic cathedral we are on the way to appreciating the beauty of all

the subsidiary arts contributing to it. Then we cannot help sympathizing with the Middle Ages which are expressed in that combination of arts. If we cannot share the religious beliefs that dominated them, we can feel the lift of their religion and imagine what it meant. We may envy people who could believe as the medieval men did, and who could embody their faith in masterpieces of art which are mostly anonymous. These were done coöperatively, with the help of whole communities, and by individual workmen who were more concerned to make something beautiful to glorify God than to make a name for themselves.

### MEDIEVAL EDUCATION

Three distinct types of training developed during the Middle Ages, each being fostered by the class or institution that it served: feudalism and chivalry produced an elaborate and, to us, fantastic training to prepare the noble for a knightly career; the industrial guilds of the towns developed the necessary skill of their artisans by a system of apprenticeship; and the Church developed education to prepare for service in the Church and to promote the Christian life. Since it was the Church that produced the only public system of education in the Middle Ages, it is to this system that we refer when we speak of medieval education.

Something has already been said of the service of the Church in fostering education. A little reflection will make it clear why the Church assumed direction and control. No other corporate body had an interest in fostering a system of education for the whole Christian world. The interests of chivalry and of the industrial guilds were narrow class interests. The Church was universal and, as the dominating institution in medieval society, was inevitably concerned in promoting the Christian way of life and its own interests as an institution. Education, therefore, was essentially religious in character. Instruction aimed to inculcate medieval culture, just as modern education sets up as one of its important aims the inculcating of the fundamentals of our own culture. During the



first few centuries of the Middle Ages the educated class was practically confined to the clergy, and outside the clerical ranks few even learned to read or write. During later centuries, however, until the rise of the universities, though education continued to be thought of as a possession peculiar to clericals, the number educated outside their ranks had greatly increased.

The rise of the universities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was an event of first importance in the history of education and intellectual life. They appear to have been a kind of spontaneous outgrowth of a remarkable enthusiasm for learning that had become increasingly evident from the eleventh century on. New information, such as was coming in especially from Greek and Arabian sources, stimulated curiosity and eager discussion. Such problems as the reconciliation of faith and reason and the question of the merits of the direct study of nature led to such an influx of questioners to the cathedrals that separate teaching faculties were eventually licensed. About 1200 the University of Paris became a separate institution from the cathedral of Notre Dame. Sometimes spoken of as the mother university, the University of Paris served as a model for others. As early as the twelfth century there were four outstanding centers of learning: Paris and Oxford, with kindred interests in scholasticism; Bologna, famous for its law; and Salerno, equally famous in the field of medicine. Since few books were available, instruction was perforce by lecture and discussion. With the coming of the printed page the massing of books in university libraries began, and education took on a new and modern phase.

### FREEDOM OF THOUGHT IN THE MIDDLE AGES

To one living in the twentieth century, in a period in which individual liberty is exalted, much proclaimed, and, supposedly, freely enjoyed—at least until recent years—the picture of medieval society may appear depressing. Under the influence of our own cultural biases we may overlook the point of view of medieval man and get an unrealistic picture of his intellectual life. We might conclude that the domination of

medieval theology compelled all men to think alike, but the conclusion would not be accurate. Theology acted upon intellectual life at once as a stimulus and as a drag. But even as a drag, it was not so much that theology pulled backward, as that it confined the intellectual advance to one channel. To comprehend the alliance of thought with the interests of religion we must recall once more the place of the Church in medieval culture.

There was a general feeling that of the various theories which intellectual leaders might expound, those were to be favored which supported or did least damage to the established tenets and dogma of religion. Such an attitude can be understood when it is remembered that religion in its organized and institutionalized form promoted the general welfare of the people, gave them a sense of security, furnished their architecture and art, their pageants, their wars and peace. Above all, it laid out the way of salvation. Such a religion seemed indispensable to the people of those times, and the intellectual atmosphere was bound to be favorable to it; the official authority exercised by the Church was accepted as a necessary part of the means of security.

Nevertheless the Middle Ages witnessed much intellectual independence, and a great amount of honest thinking on vital issues was permitted, and even encouraged. When, for example, in a belatedly recovered work of Aristotle, the statement was found that the world had no beginning—a statement in contradiction to the Church's faith in the account of creation given in the Book of Genesis—the Church did not prohibit debate of the question as to which was right. Must Aristotle be accepted or rejected? This issue involved decades of arguments and public hearings on the pros and cons, just as recently we have had debates on whether to allow the teaching of evolution. Aristotle's works on nature were banned in 1203, but in 1250, rather than have them studied without regard to theological interests, the ban was removed.

Seldom in history has there been a time of more vigorous intellectual disagreement among scholars of note than from the ninth to the thirteenth century. During this period, and

most notably in the twelfth century, the Jewish-Christian tradition, Greek philosophy, and Arabian science all found a place in medieval Europe. In the thirteenth century the peak of medieval activity was reached, and since that century stands at the threshold to the Renaissance, it might be said that there was no abrupt change from the earlier period to the later; rather, that the remarkable intellectual outburst of the Renaissance was clearly in the stage of preparation in those preceding centuries. The discussion concerning the nature of the world is an illustration in point. Granted that there is one God and that this is his world, what is the importance of things in this world? Rather commonly it is supposed that the thinkers of the Middle Ages unanimously answered, "They are of no importance"; but the fact is that they considered the question so important that the thought devoted to it from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries paved the way to modern science.

### SCIENCE DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

Measured by modern standards, medieval man knew exceedingly little about natural science and cared for it hardly at all until the closing centuries of the period. The low esteem in which science was generally held is understandable when we remember that medieval thought was largely absorbed in the world after death. This otherworldliness made theology dominant. The ancient cultures—particularly the Greek, as we have seen—had developed a considerable body of science; but upon it the Christian world turned its back during the early centuries of the Christian era, and Greek science was temporarily lost. Since science was pagan and secular, it was held in suspicion in most of its phases. Theology was thought to be the key to all learning worth while to a Christian. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), one of the greatest of the medieval scholars, held that God thought this world into being as the best of all possible worlds, and that the eternal ideas are God's, and that they are, therefore, more real and important than anything else can be. Consequently his theory of education was that the study of nature was mere elemen-



tary practice, and that theology was the apex of the pyramid of knowledge and the crowning glory of all learning. A papal order in 1279 made Aquinas's works the basis of all teaching.

But the word of Aquinas was not the last word. Natural science was born of a deep interest in, and an intense curiosity about, the world of nature. The swing from heaven to earth was already in progress in Aquinas's day. The year following the papal order of 1279, William of Occam was born, an English Franciscan friar, who became a leader among those who came to take a position opposed to that of Aquinas. Though a churchman himself, the effect of his teachings ultimately contributed to the separation of Church and State and gave an impetus to scientific interests. A devout believer in God, he was, nevertheless, convinced that his world is the proper object of study, and that all knowledge which cannot be gained through sense perceptions must be a matter of faith rather than reason. The particular objects around us are, therefore, the ones we can hope to know best. It is our duty to worship God, but we must use our minds primarily to understand the natural world in which we live. Thus Occam paved the way to that all-absorbing interest in this immediate world which became the object of absorbing interest during the Renaissance, and from which modern science developed. He furthermore gave to science the much used Law of Parsimony, still often called "Occam's razor." It is not a law, but the general principle that when two or more theories explain equally well a given fact or phenomenon, the simpler is to be preferred. Occam's writings were banned at the University of Paris eight years before his death, but other universities, such as Prague, Vienna, and Heidelberg, permitted similarly minded thinkers to carry on the same line of thought and teaching.

### The attitude of the Church toward science

Much has been said and written of the obstacles put in the way of the development of scientific knowledge by the medieval Church. The Church does have much to answer for in this regard, but it should be remembered that her opposition

to freedom of thought manifested itself more in a later age than in the medieval period itself. It tolerated the vigorous debates that stimulated the minds of Occam and Aquinas. It was after Occam's time that the Church reacted strongly against secular interests, became more rigid in its views, and resorted to persecution to dispose of conflicting opinions. It was after the opening of the Renaissance that science paid its sad price in lives and prohibited works of genius—a price which included the burning of Bruno at the stake for his views on nature and the forcing of the aged Galileo to his knees to recant his belief in the Copernican theory, which held that the earth revolves about the sun. In the Middle Ages before the Renaissance there had been bigotry and intolerance, but all in all that early period had really stimulated controversial thought, and many of the newer views then born in the Church gained enough vitality to persist alone even after the Church disowned them and tried to suppress them by force.

#### **The absence of experimental method**

Despite the temper of honest investigation which characterized the constructive period of medieval thought, the intellectual leaders of that time—the scholastics, as they were called—failed to produce that essential instrument of progress in scientific knowledge, the experimental approach in the study of natural phenomena. Although there is some evidence that the experimental method was used earlier—in medicine and anatomy, for example—the rule of the scholastics was to consult recognized authorities, such as the Bible and Aristotle and the early Church Fathers, or to depend on sheer reason, rather than to seek what their sense organs could reveal to them of the nature of things about them. The medieval student got his science in the library rather than in the laboratory or in the world of nature about him. It has been said with some truth that he was inclined to accept everything but the evidence of his own eyes.

This attitude persisted among many intellectuals even down into the Renaissance. An illustration of this overlapping of medieval and Renaissance habits of mind is furnished by a

Padua professor whom Galileo entreated in vain to look at the moon and planets through his telescope to verify certain new discoveries in astronomy. "There are seven windows given to animals in the domicile of the head," said the Padua professor, "through which air is admitted to the tabernacle of the body, to enlighten, to warm, to nourish it. What are these parts of the microcosmos? Two nostrils, two eyes, two ears, and a mouth. So in the heavens, as in the microcosmos, there are two favorable stars, two unpropitious, two luminaries, and Mercury undecided and indifferent. From this and many other similarities in nature, such as the seven metals, etc., which it were tedious to enumerate, we gather that the number of planets is necessarily seven." It was Galileo, with his eyes, his telescope, and his mathematical data, who together with some of his contemporaries and followers ultimately corrected the habits of mind and the methods of thinking of men like the Padua professor and ushered in the new age of science. But that is a story that belongs to a later period, the Renaissance and modern times.

### THE HERITAGE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

The study of the Renaissance reveals, as we shall presently see, the passing of the Middle Ages and the birth of the modern era. But it should hardly be necessary to point out that words may mislead or be misconstrued. What this survey has particularly sought to emphasize is the idea that medieval society passed on to us elements of the ancient cultures that still live in our civilization. It added to the elements it had assimilated elements that were peculiarly its own, and the compound is what we call medieval culture. The Middle Ages passed, but the medieval heritage persists in our lives to a degree that we do not suspect. How true this is will be apparent later when we turn to examine the customs, traditions, and practices that center about marriage and the family; our economic foundations; the development of our political ideas and institutions; our religious beliefs; our education; our moral standards; our social manners, attitudes, and beliefs; and our



literature, art, and architecture. Then it is that we begin to realize how close to modern men stand the cultures of the ancient and the medieval world. (For summary of medieval civilization see Appendix, p. 1041.)

### SELECTED REFERENCES FOR FURTHER READING

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SHERWOOD, R., *The Virtuous Knight* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931). An historical novel, in which an English youth who has been reared to all the Christian virtues follows Richard I on one of the crusades and gains a hearty respect for the Moslem civilization.

## TABLE II

### SOME HISTORICAL LANDMARKS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION DURING THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE

#### Fifth Century A. D.

##### WESTERN EUROPE

(1) Beginning of the Middle Ages; (2) repeated invasions of Germanic tribes; (3) establishment of Germanic kingdoms; (4) end of independent line of Roman Emperors in the West.

##### EASTERN EUROPE

Eastern Empire (Byzantine) survives barbarian invasions, preserves Greek and Roman civilization.

#### Sixth Century

Conquest of Gaul by the Franks.

(1) Byzantine Empire at its height under Justinian; (2) the Justinian Code of Roman law.

#### Seventh Century

Conversion of the Germanic tribes to Christianity.

Mohammed preaches new religion in Arabia and his disciples conquer a great empire in the Near East.

#### Eighth and Ninth Centuries

(1) Rise of the Carolingians (House of Charlemagne); (2) Charlemagne crowned Emperor (800); (3) greatness and decline of Charlemagne's Empire; (4) Viking raids throughout Europe (ninth century).

(1) Failure of Mohammedan attempts to penetrate Europe in the East; (2) conquest of north Africa and Spain by Mohammedans; (3) Bagdad becomes center of eastern Mohammedan world, Cordova of western; (4) height of Mohammedan culture at Bagdad (ninth century).

#### Tenth Century

(1) Establishment of feudalism in Germany and France; (2) Otto I revives Empire (Holy Roman Empire).

#### Eleventh Century

(1) Papacy is reformed and assumes position of world power; (2) beginning of Crusades (1095).

(1) Seljuk Turks enter the Near East from central Asia, overrun Asia Minor, capture Jerusalem (1071); (2) separation of Greek and Latin churches.

#### Twelfth Century

(1) Intellectual revival in science, philosophy, etc.; (2) development of Gothic art; (3) rise of the universities.



## TABLE II—*Continued*

### Thirteenth Century

#### WESTERN EUROPE

(1) Great age of scholasticism; (2) Church at summit of its power; (3) partial recovery of Spanish territory from Mohammedans by Christians; (4) strengthening of royal power in France.

#### EASTERN EUROPE

European travelers discover China—travels of Marco Polo, etc.

### Fourteenth Century

(1) Decline of the papacy; (2) beginnings of the Renaissance in Italy; (3) decline of the Holy Roman Empire; (4) Hundred Years' War between England and France; (5) rise of the Hansa towns; (6) decline of feudalism and of the guild system.

Rise of the Ottoman Turks.

### Fifteenth Century

(1) Height of the Italian Renaissance in art and literature; (2) completion of Spanish and of French unity, development of nationalism, rising power of absolute princes; (3) beginning of the great age of discovery—Da Gama, Columbus—followed by Commercial Revolution and the expansion of European civilization overseas.

(1) Capture of Constantinople by the Turks (1453); (2) extension of Turkish power into the Balkans; (3) end of the Byzantine Empire.

### Sixteenth Century

(1) The Protestant Reformation and the division of European society into Catholics and Protestants; (2) close of the period of the Renaissance in Italy; (3) national monarchies in England, France, Spain, and Portugal.

Turks extend their conquests over most of north Africa.

## THE TRANSITION TO MODERN CIVILIZATION

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IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER the view was expressed that the whole period from the fifth to the seventeenth century might in a sense be regarded as a transition from ancient to modern civilization, during which a slow assimilation of the ancient cultures was taking place. In general, assimilation was accelerated with the passing of the centuries. From the fourteenth century on the discovery of ancient culture proceeded with such speed as to generate forces which the bulwarks of medieval authority and tradition could no longer resist. Antique civilization, for the first time, was being seen as a consistent whole and from a new point of view. The human mind was set free to range beyond the bounds of the medieval world. With that freedom the Middle Ages gradually passed and the modern age began.

The scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were not unaware of the transformation. The superiority of their own enlightened era to that which had preceded was to them so apparent that they gave to the earlier period the contemptuous label, "The Dark Ages." Under the influence of this light from the ancient world, the men of the new transition epoch cast aside many ideals of medieval Christianity and revived an older conception of "the good life." In so far as their efforts could achieve it, classical civilization was reborn

in their day. They were so successful that later French scholars named their period "the Renaissance," or rebirth.

### The character of the change

The contrast between medieval and Renaissance ways of life, great though it was, was not the product of any sharp break between the two. Signs of coming change in the centuries leading up to the Renaissance have already been noticed in the preceding chapter. Still more impressive were the changes observable in southern Italy under the stimulating influence of Frederick II (1212-1250), king of Sicily and Holy Roman Emperor, who had placed reason above divine revelation and who had "tried to wrest the world from the grip of the Church." The older custom among historians of attributing to refugee Greeks from Constantinople (after its fall in 1453) the responsibility for introducing the Renaissance by reviving Greek studies in Italy and northern Europe has long since been shown to be a mistake. Greek studies were undertaken long before 1453. Moreover, the "revival of learning" in the classic literatures was but one aspect of a more extensive and more complex cultural change to all of which the name "Renaissance" has been applied.<sup>1</sup> Thus broadly conceived, it involved change in religious thought and institutions, in economic and political life, in education, in art, architecture, and science. There was hardly an aspect of life that it did not touch.

In choosing the year 1300 as the opening of the Renaissance, we accept as unmistakable evidence of a shift to a new civilization certain developments in literature and government. They do not reveal a sharp break with the past, nor do they suggest that in that year some single all-important agency of renovation began to operate. But they do demonstrate the appearance of the modern spirit. Dante's masterpiece, *The Divine Comedy*, ushered in the fourteenth century with a consummate integration of medieval life and learning, but it was written in one of Europe's new, living languages, with a bold individualism not associated with writers of the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup>Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. xiii.



As the century progressed, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Chaucer revealed a reverence for the classical heritage and a concern with the things of earthly life which, in later, fuller development, was characteristic of Renaissance men of letters. In this same period, municipal independence replaced an earlier imperial control in Italy; for 70 years, the papacy was centered at Avignon instead of Rome; and in England and France, the Hundred Years' War fostered the replacement of feudalism by nationalism. If the seeds of modern civilization were stirring in the later Middle Ages, during the fourteenth century the first shoots were observable above the ground.

### ITALY ON THE EVE OF THE RENAISSANCE

It was in the Italian peninsula that the Renaissance began. The reasons are not far to seek. There, more than in any other part of Europe, conditions were propitious. First to be noted is the economic prosperity of its many cities. Several, notably Genoa and Venice, had become mid-points in the commerce which sprang up between the Near East and western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Later, into the stream of Oriental goods taken north of the Alps, increasing quantities of Italian products, the output of her orchards, her vineyards, and her artisans, had been poured. By the fourteenth century, trade was carried on not only between continents and regions; it was widely developed within limited localities as well. As a result of economic specialization, Italy was the scene of a richer and more varied condition of material well-being than ever obtained in the Middle Ages. Part of this wealth permitted the resort, as an economic luxury, to the gratification of the love of beauty. A class of scholars and artists could be maintained.

#### **The effect of political and social conditions**

Politically the thirteenth century witnessed the emergence of a host of independent Italian cities over which the Holy Roman emperor could exercise no control, and the Pope, not enough control to effect a unification. In each of these cities,

some variety of local self-government developed; most frequently, after an experiment in democracy and oligarchy, a species of petty tyranny. The rivalries between cities involved them in constant warfare, but this was made the business of mercenary troops under professional chieftains, the *condottieri*, not the concern of the ordinary citizen, who was left in comparative peace and security. Frequently the *condottieri* were placed at the head of the civil as well as the military establishments, perhaps only in a temporary emergency, but often for longer terms. Making themselves permanent despots, they eventually became the founders of subsequent dynasties, married into noble houses, patronized artists and scholars, and expanded their power over surrounding communities. This concentration of power within the cities in one man was paralleled by the concentration of power within all Italy in the grip of five leading city-states. As time passed, Milan, Venice, Florence, Rome, and Naples became the "great powers" of the Italian peninsula, dominating rural districts and subordinate cities, rivaling each other in the accumulation of wealth and in literary and artistic achievement, and holding each other in check by equally powerful diplomatic alliances.

Into the five great Italian cities and their satellites the Italian nobles moved in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, turning from landed proprietorship to trade and manufacturing. The result was an unusual burgher class. To normal burgher interests, more aristocratic tastes and traditions were united. It was to this group that the new culture of the Italian Renaissance made its greatest appeal. As Italians, the revival of the great Roman past was to them most appealing. They sought to recover the old civilization in its entirety; to those dwelling north of the Alps, the revival was more deliberately selective and partial, as well as later in time.

#### **The effect of Roman culture**

Moreover, the peoples of Italy were linked to the culture of classical Rome by many ties. About them lay the remains of

the ancient empire—roads, temples, aqueducts, bridges—some in ruins, some entire, all mute but tangible evidences of a glorious past. In the libraries of medieval monasteries the writings of classical authors were preserved, occasionally studied for their aid in understanding Scripture but not for the purpose which they were to serve in the Renaissance, the cultivation of individual personality. The Latin tongue, much modified though it was, was the ancient language of Italy from which the vernacular dialects had been derived, and to which an earnest Italian student might again be led unhampered by the difficulties confronting students of other lands. Throughout the Middle Ages Rome had been to western Europe the great mother city; but while to the people of northern Europe it was the place of St. Peter and St. Paul, to the Italians it was also the great capital, with political as well as religious claims to grandeur. Once the Italian suspected that the life of the ancients could equal or even surpass that of the thirteenth century, he could strive for its recovery with the conviction that he was regaining his own.

#### **The recovery of classical literature and art**

The social situation in fourteenth-century Italy might have brought about a clear break with medieval, traditional ideals. What actually occurred, however, was the revival, in that situation, by various noteworthy individuals, of the study of Latin, then of Greek, language and literature, and through that study, the recovery of ideals and customs dominant in ancient times. From the crumbling libraries where they lay, disregarded, the writings of Cicero, Virgil, and the other ancients were rescued, recopied, and read. From Athens, Constantinople, and other Greek cities in Asia Minor, texts of the Greek authors were obtained for Italian scholars and Italian libraries. Translations into Latin were made, improving from generation to generation, while eventually the original language was itself mastered under the instruction of Greek tutors who came to Italy.

Museums developed for the custody of ancient coins, statues, and fragmentary sculpture, and for casts of the masterpieces



not otherwise to be studied. Merchants in the Far East, trading from the Black Sea to Cairo, secreted in their cargoes such works of classical art as came their way, knowing full well the market for them in Italian cities. Italian artists gained immeasurably from their careful scrutiny of collections in these museums. Thus, by the fifteenth century, Italy was transformed; and in the north, along the routes of trade and travel, the new wonders of Florence, Venice, and the rest were known about and partly copied; the new ideas, in part, discussed and welcomed.

### THE SPIRIT OF THE RENAISSANCE

The major differences between Renaissance and medieval civilization may be traced to the sharply conflicting attitudes toward life dominant in each. In the Middle Ages, the main thing of consequence to man was the divine spark within him, his soul. Exiled on earth in a human body, the soul's true happiness awaited its entrance into heaven. Eternal blessedness could be won by purifying the human soul of sin through the ministrations of the Church and a strict denial of all promptings of the flesh. Medieval man, in consequence, thought of life as merely a brief preparation for eternity; he ran a gantlet of earthly temptations. Peace awaited him at the end, if he persevered in a straight course; hell's infinite sufferings, should he be diverted to earthly joys on the way.

#### The revolt against medieval attitudes

In the Renaissance what man prized was not his soul but his humanity, of which the soul was but a part. He extolled as "the good life" an earthly blessedness, to be attained through the full perfection of human personality. Not "otherworldliness" but "this-worldliness" (secularism); not asceticism, but versatility; not self-denial, but self-assertion won the applause of Renaissance man. Thus he stands as the embodiment of the spirit of rebellion against the medieval authority of Church, dogma, and tradition, accepting, instead,

the older authority of the classical literatures. In Italy, versatility and self-assertion usually went far beyond the bounds of classical moderation. By a few in Italy, and by relatively more in northern Europe, notably Erasmus and Milton, the development and assertion of personality were reconciled with the ethical restraint either of religion or the old Greek ideal, "nothing in excess." These men, although they abandoned the medieval attitude toward life and sought an earthly well-being, considered human felicity to be best secured by some variety of self-control rather than, as has of late been advocated, by all varieties of "self-expression."

Where the medieval man thought of himself as at all times part of a larger unit, family, manor, corporation, people, or race, the man of the Renaissance was accustomed to regard himself as a unit. Instead of the protective association which the medieval man preferred, he prized independence and freedom, for which he equipped himself by greater knowledge. Instead of the reward for excellence which came beyond the grave, he sought a reward on earth, though he was undoubtedly willing to accept a subsequent reward in addition.

#### **The cultivation of individuality**

This new individualism and secularism found expression in a passion for fame, which became a guiding motive for the actions of men. Desiring it for themselves, they strove to gain it by excellence in human accomplishments. Even further, they maintained the fame of others, crowning poets, marking and preserving birthplaces and tombs, and writing biographies for posterity to read. Paralleling the desire for fame was the preservation of individual honor, a powerful factor in ethical situations, restraining men from acts of meanness, but not always suppressing selfishness, and occasionally prompting outrageous deeds for its ostensible protection. The autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, the goldsmith, illustrates the combination of the sense of honor and thirst for fame in one passionate personality of considerable distinction. Cellini was furiously resentful whenever he thought himself deprived of credit due him for his artistic performances or



11. ITALY ABOUT 1450



subjected to slights and reflections upon his courage. His feats of artistry were interspersed with countless quarrels and all too frequent murders and brawls. He describes them all with the most apparent egotism and complacency.

Renaissance man cultivated his individuality through both his mind and his will. The rich personalities produced by this culture included some of astonishing versatility. The Medici, famous political masters of Florence, in addition to being great merchants, extensive farmers, and bankers with enormous financial interests, were students of classical literature, collectors of coins, manuscripts, and works of art, and discriminating patrons of artists and scholars. In the case of Lorenzo, "the Magnificent" (died in 1492), they included a poet and man of letters. Michelangelo (died in 1564) devoted his eighty-nine years to sculpture, painting, poetry, and architecture of a high order. Outstanding, perhaps, was Leon Battista Alberti (died in 1472), self-taught musician and composer, painter, sculptor, architect, author in two languages of novels, elegies, eclogues, and speeches, defender of Christianity, student of science and lover of nature, whose bodily strength, moreover, was developed to the point that he could vault from a standing position over the head of a man, and could fling a coin to a cathedral's roof.<sup>1</sup> In addition to these persons who neared the Italian Renaissance ideal of the "universal man," there were hundreds of less prominent men and women whose versatile accomplishments attest the prevalence of that ideal.

Such was the spirit of the Renaissance. When the Renaissance man turned from thoughts and feelings to deeds, we should expect to find expression of that spirit in his intellectual achievements. And so it was. The great accomplishments of the period lay in the fields of art, science, and religion. In each, the dominant, new characteristics appear to be individualism and secularism; that is, this-worldliness, fostered by an ethics and an education similarly changed. Let us turn first to a consideration of art.

<sup>1</sup>Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (London, 1921, eighth edition), pp. 137-138.

## ART, LITERATURE, AND EDUCATION

## Architecture

The Renaissance was an era of unexampled artistic creation. In architecture both the revival of classical styles and the introduction of new elements of beauty were the concern of the same individual architects. For centuries the major patrons of the arts had been church corporations and ecclesiastics of high degree. The thirteenth century had seen the creation of numerous superb edifices in a new style of great beauty—much later called Gothic—a style previously described as the apex of medieval achievement in the realm of art, and as strikingly expressive of the spirit of the age that produced it.

The Gothic fittingly belonged to an age of otherworldliness. With the coming of the Renaissance, new ideals emerged in the whole field of art, new patrons appeared, and new uses were developed. The ruling aristocratic houses of Italian city-states, great merchant princes emerging from Europe's growing middle class, the rulers of new national states—all sought the services of artists to dignify their stations. Their wealth sustained an increasingly numerous artistic fraternity, but was bestowed only with new demands on its talent. Even among the ecclesiastics, who still continued to be great patrons, the new demand was for decorative workmanship on themes which had no devotional significance. In architecture these changing demands were most strikingly evidenced.

The new political organizations required public buildings; the growing mercantile wealth was partly diverted to city palaces; the end of the feudal wars made possible the construction of luxurious country villas and châteaux which were far removed from the style of the medieval castle. These changed uses necessarily led to architectural novelties. In another respect, the Renaissance builders departed widely from what today we call the Gothic style, for the later edifices deliberately sought a solid setting close to a highly valued earth. The humanistic concept of the appropriate mode of life was paralleled in the most highly prized elements of archi-

tectural beauty; namely, balance and symmetry. Beauty in their buildings, as in American colonial structures, rested on exquisite proportion rather than on the more mysterious and wonder-inspiring features of the Gothic. Greek, and especially Roman, architecture formed the models to which Renaissance architects paid increasing respect. Some of them became slavish imitators, meticulous followers of the directions laid down by the writer, Palladio, in his text on architectural design. Most, however, while eager to adopt the classical standards of beauty, insisted upon adapting the classical modes of realizing such standards to the new uses, the new materials, and the new surroundings of the Renaissance.

From 1406, when the Florentine Brunelleschi determined to erect a great octagonal dome on the cathedral in that city, to the seventeenth-century completion of St. Peter's Church in Rome, architectural designs, from Italy to England, were constantly modified. During that period the individualism of the Renaissance was well illustrated by the emergence of scores of individual, famous architects, each with a reputation built upon his own performances and sedulously maintained by him. The Middle Ages, even the period of great Gothic building, did not yield such individuals; architects in those days usually remained nameless members of guilds and orders. The great buildings then were coöperative enterprises, not individual achievements as in the Renaissance period.

### **Painting and sculpture**

The Renaissance marked a conspicuous advance in painting and sculpture over the earlier medieval art, and produced a host of men of genius in those fields. The advance appears not only in a broader conception of the ideals of art and the uses to which it may be put, but also in technique and in the knowledge of color. Painting was primarily utilized as a new form of wall decoration, replacing with frescoes the older mosaic. It was, however, adapted to the decoration of bridal chests, and of altar pieces, and eventually was applied to easel pictures. The Renaissance esteem for the world and its human occupants encouraged a closer scrutiny of nature and



of man, and made it seem more worth while to represent selected examples in painting. Giotto, who first combined the painting knowledge of Florentines and Romans into a single style, opened the fourteenth century with work of unprecedented merit. One hundred years elapsed before advances were made on Giotto's art, and one hundred and fifty before the high noon was reached with Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael of Urbino, Michelangelo, and Titian.

In the meantime, realistic painting was more and more closely approximated through the growing technical proficiency in the use of color and the representation of mass and of perspective. Eventually it became possible to meet the requirements set forth by Leonardo:

What should first be judged in seeing if a picture be good is whether the movements are appropriate to the mind of the figure that moves. Secondly, the creation of relief (projection) where there is none [is to be satisfactorily accomplished.]<sup>1</sup>

Renaissance painters turned from the painting of symbolic figures, whose appeal to the observer was the secondary attraction of significance; instead they created paintings which were first of all beautiful in form and color, and secondly, pleasing in their meaning as well. They broadened the range of subjects—to Christian legend adding Greek mythology and secular themes. Their delight in human beauty was in great contrast to the medieval disparagement of the body. In place of the conventionalized, elongated, heavily draped human figure of medieval mosaic and sculpture, the Renaissance painters (and sculptors also) freely portrayed nude human bodies of superlative beauty. Both painters and sculptors strove for anatomical correctness, until, in some of the strenuous productions of Michelangelo, mastery in this field led to positive "athleticism" for the sake of displaying excessively muscular men in an astounding variety of postures—a display of technical proficiency at the expense of realistic beauty.

In Venice and Milan, in Florence and in Rome, in the many smaller but important cities which lay between them, new

<sup>1</sup>Frank J. Mather, Jr., *A History of Italian Painting*, p. 1.

buildings were adorned with new paintings and sculpture. In northern Europe in lesser measure, and a little later in time, the same activity could have been noted. Today much has been lost from earthquake and fire. Wars have led to plundering, and northern cities boast many a masterpiece carried off from Italy in her days of weakness. But great museums have gathered what they could: the Doge's palace in Venice, the Uffizi gallery and the Bargello and the Pitti palace in Florence, and the Vatican and St. Peter's in Rome remain to reward the visitor with the rich residues of an unparalleled era of varied artistic creation.

### Literature

In literature, as in the other arts, the Renaissance interest in man above all other subjects is observable. The central themes were no longer the miracles of God's providence or the wonders and weird aspects of nature; they were the activities of free-willed men, working out their earthly careers. Ranging from the religious to the obscene, the literature of the period reveals a primary interest in human earthly concerns. As there was a change in theme, so was there a change in the language used. From the appearance of Dante's masterpiece *The Divine Comedy* in the early fourteenth century to the publication of Montaigne's essays in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the language of medieval writing, debased Latin, was rivaled by rising vernacular tongues. Italian, French, Spanish, German, and English developed as literary tongues, aided in their progress by discriminating writers, and, later, standardized by grammarians and academicians.

Latin, of course, continued to be used; as a result of studious recourse to classical models, however, it retained but little resemblance to the literary language of the Middle Ages. A host of scholars in Latin and Greek literature, to whom in the nineteenth century the name *humanists* was given, edited manuscript texts and composed translations from Greek into Latin; in addition they wrote in Latin on topics of contemporary importance, and to these tried to apply the teachings of the classic sages.

## Education

The spirit of the Renaissance penetrated the field of education; a new objective, a new ideal arose in opposition to the medieval conception.

The Middle Age acknowledged two specific types of education: that of the knight and that of the clerk, whether lawyer or ecclesiastic. Both types of training were professional; the first, indeed, was more than that, for it was limited to a caste, that of the lords of the soil. Each was the counterpart of the root-idea of medieval society—organization by rank, class, and corporate unit. With the advent of a new concept—the express creation of Italy, or, at least, her rediscovery—of man as a layman, neither soldier nor clerk; of man as an individual, not a nameless fraction of a group, personality became the conscious goal of development.<sup>1</sup>

(Inevitably, a new type of education was demanded to meet the new ideal.) Some of the leading humanists wrote on the subject; others were great schoolmasters themselves; and from the efforts of these two groups we have as results some outstanding personalities and influential treatises. Among the famous teachers of the world should be numbered Guarino da Verona, Vittorino da Feltre, and John Colet (founder of St. Paul's School in London), who were directly responsible for the education of scholars, princes, and men of affairs, and worked out new methods of instruction. (Famous books outlining the requirements of the new age,) with much of interest and value for the present, have come down to us, such as *The Institution of the Prince*, which William Budé composed for the edification of Francis I; *The Book of the Governor*, by Thomas Eliot; and *The Perfect Courtier*, a famous book by Castiglione. Others, notably Erasmus, exerted a strong influence in a series of writings on educational objectives and methods. (All were concerned with utilizing classical literature and language, mathematics, music, and natural science, healthful games and athletic exercises to develop fine, rich personalities "for the due service of the community and of God.")

The ideal humanistic education was, therefore, secular and

<sup>1</sup>W. H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance, 1400-1600* (The Macmillan Company, 1906), pp. 244-245.



individualistic. It was, moreover, beyond the powers of many. It was expected to yield "an order of the learned," to be the privilege of a minority, but of a minority "in no way determined by birth or wealth, but by capacity." Yet its tendency was to set up a class, not narrow or professional in type, rather an educated upper-middle class upon which (in Italy) were falling the responsibilities now slipping from feudal society.<sup>1</sup> It was to be aristocratic in the true sense. Unfortunately, education and learning both fell into the hands of many who used them as an outlet for their egotism, men who were pedants and not scholars. Before the end of the Renaissance, those who degraded the humanistic ideal had, by very numbers, overwhelmed those who still maintained it; these pedants it was, and not the humanists, who provoked and merited the contempt so frequently expressed.

#### Admission of the New Learning to the universities

One other aspect of education in the Renaissance is to be noted, besides its utilization of the "New Learning" primarily for the development of personality. Both education and learning in the Renaissance centered at points of distinctly secular importance. (Since the older universities repelled the new studies as long as possible, the courts of princes and the free cities of the North became the principal seats of classical scholarship. The scholars who there found patrons and students carried on a long warfare with the universities, persistent exponents of the obsolete medieval system. In the end humanism triumphed; one by one the universities reluctantly admitted the New Learning on terms of equality.)

It might be said in passing that a somewhat similar situation exists in the present relationship of the custodians of classical culture to the exponents of newer learning, principally in natural science. Greek and Latin studies have fallen in public esteem; those devoted to them are said to be maintaining an outgrown "badge" of culture, dead languages, at the expense of what is valid and appropriate for the present era. They are declared to be maintaining something barren, and thus to

<sup>1</sup>Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

be diverting energy and attention from what is substantial and worth while. A certain plausibility is given to this contention because the classical studies usually remain at such an elementary level on the one hand, and because the discoveries of science have been so rich on the other. The contemporary victory of the scientists has a certain historic justice in that during the Renaissance classical studies in the field of letters were undoubtedly pressed to a degree which curtailed the scientific investigations then under way.

### SCIENCE DURING THE RENAISSANCE

Although a growing interest in scientific knowledge was foreshadowed in the last centuries of the medieval period, (modern science begins with the Renaissance, when thirst for new achievement and discovery and interest in all things pertaining to man and earth fostered a keen and critical observation of natural phenomena and the formulation of hypotheses to explain them.) In the light of the preponderant influence of science in modern civilization, its beginnings are, for the student of culture, a matter of cardinal interest.

(The spirit of inquiry is well exemplified in Leonardo da Vinci. In Leonardo, who was primarily a scientist, curiosity about nature was practically endless. He gave his attention to monsters, analyzing their fearsomeness; to birds, noting carefully their mode of flight; to beautiful human bodies, calculating their mathematical proportions. Geological evidences of the Flood, mechanical devices, and engines of war—all received his interested and inventive attention. He was an unflinching advocate of mathematics as an important branch of learning. He was a persistent and continuous observer of all about him. "Try to be a calm spectator," he taught students of painting, "of how people laugh and weep, hate and love, blanch from horror and cry out in pain; look, learn, investigate, observe, in order that thou mayest come to know the expression of all human emotion.")

<sup>1</sup>D. Merejkowski, *The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci*, p. 169.

**Advances in science**

Leonardo's scientific accomplishments were less than they might have been, because of the dispersion of his energies. The same scientific temper in others, when restricted to narrower scope, yielded important fruits. Medicine made great advances as the result, first, of a thorough mastery of classical source books by Hippocrates and Galen, and second, of a resort to objective studies of human physiology. Anatomical dissection was practiced, and much was learned about the circulation of the blood. Chemistry became more than the alchemistic search for the "philosopher's stone." Paracelsus (died in 1541) led the way for the alliance of chemistry with pharmacy. Botany and zoölogy were both pursued for the understanding they might contribute toward the physical life of man. Botanical gardens and menageries could be found in the establishments of rulers and men of wealth.

More striking still were the advances in physical science. For them preparation was made, first, by the development of mathematical principles and formulae with which to demonstrate in quantitative terms the discoveries which ensued, and secondly, by the invention of instruments of finer accuracy. It became possible for Copernicus (1473-1543) to sustain with elaborate reasoning the theory (suggested to him by reading the Pythagorean philosophers) that the earth revolves on its own axis and with other planets forms part of a solar system whose center is the sun. It was then possible for Galileo (1564-1642) to use his telescope (constructed in 1609) to discover ratifications of the Copernican hypothesis. Both these men, in advancing the new explanation, founded it on the logical basis urged by the fourteenth-century philosopher, William of Occam, namely, the Law of Parsimony, which states that whenever one is given two otherwise equally satisfactory hypotheses, the simpler is to be preferred as the true.

Additional scientific achievements stand to the credit of Galileo. In the cathedral at Pisa the sight of a swinging chandelier, which to others meant nothing significant, revealed to his observant mind the laws of pendular motion. From



the Leaning Tower of Pisa his experiments in timing falling bodies demonstrated that rate of descent bore no relation to weight, that the heavier did not fall faster than the lighter. Like Leonardo, he was an incessant observer, but unlike Leonardo, he was inclined to test his guesses by carefully controlled "experiments." (From the Renaissance came that experimental method accepted by later ages as the key to the secrets of nature.)

Scientific knowledge was also extended in the field of geography—an expression again of the Renaissance man's insatiable curiosity about the world he lived in. This was a period when men's wonder and expectation were tremendously stimulated by thrilling discoveries of new continents of whose existence they had never dreamed. (Using a perfected compass and other instruments of navigation, pursuing a theory sustained by the beliefs of the ancients, Christopher Columbus set out from Spain in 1492 and sailed westward into the sea.) Marco Polo and others had toiled over land and sea for thousands of miles and rediscovered the farther East, which had been a sealed book to the earlier Middle Ages. Columbus, whose estimate of the earth's circumference was very much too low, expected to reach the lands of the Great Khan by a shorter journey to the west. He returned from his quest the discoverer of an immense new continent, to which he returned on subsequent voyages, and to which Spain, Portugal, France, and England sent explorers, soldiers, and colonists in succeeding years. Gold and silver from America made their way into Europe, stimulating commerce and encouraging colonial enterprises, destined ultimately to carry European culture around the globe. Whatever Columbus contributed to geographical science was promptly "applied." Exploration continued. In 1497 Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese, found the sea route to the Orient (for which Columbus had been searching) when he circled Africa, crossed the Indian Ocean, and made his way to the west coast of India. (In 1519 Magellan began a three years' voyage which carried him round the world. With that achievement men's minds leaped to encompass a world beyond the imagination of medieval society.)

### The scientific method

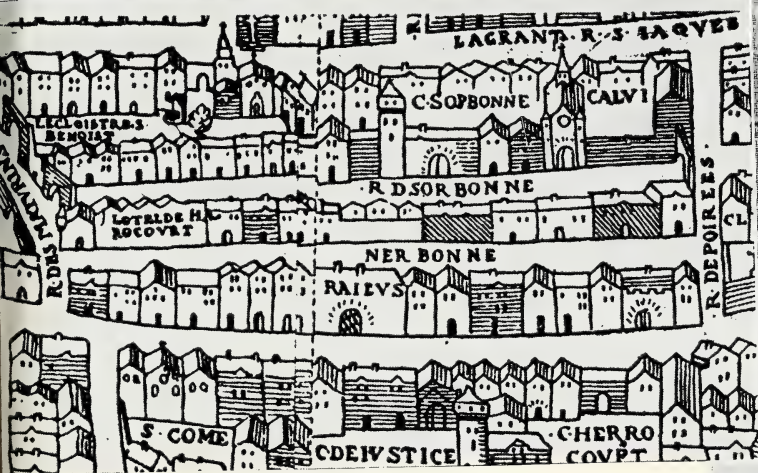
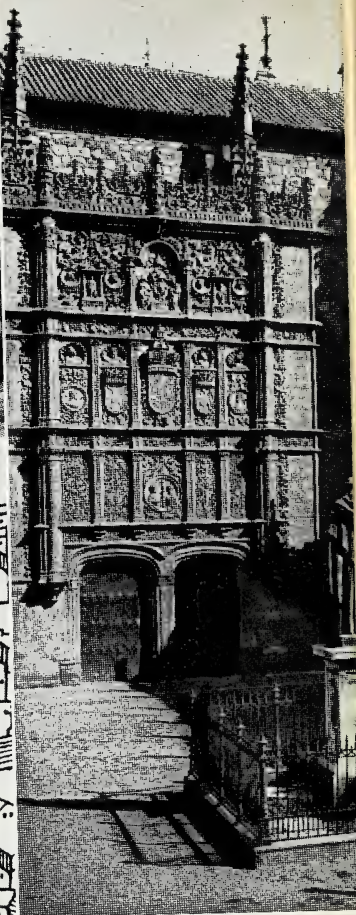
In point of time, Francis Bacon and Descartes bridge the Renaissance and the modern era. They are notable in the history of development of natural science not because they made great discoveries, but because they pointed the way so clearly for the future extension of knowledge. Bacon in his *Novum Organum* and in his *Advancement of Learning*, and Descartes in his *Discourse on Method*, presented the major features of the inductive method which scholars have ever since attempted to follow. The scholar is to approach his subject in a spirit of doubt; he must free the mind from bias and preconceptions; he must distrust mere authority. Observation and experience, and not reason, must be his guide; reason alone, without the supporting evidence of his senses, leads to error and confusion rather than to truth. Bacon emphasized the need of continued probing into hitherto unknown fields as a means of increasing human control over natural forces, and thus of continuously enlarging human happiness. The foundations of a doctrine of human progress through scientific discoveries were laid by him.

The scientific accomplishments of the Renaissance might have been much greater had the activity which produced them not been restricted by the greater valuation laid upon art and letters and by the absorption of intelligence in the religious problems connected with the Protestant and Catholic reformations. As it was, Galileo met most determined opposition from the Church; other men of scientific bent turned to historical problems to test their critical powers; and generally among the men of first intelligence scholarship in classical letters and religious literature was alone esteemed. After the invention of the printing press (1455), many of the best minds of Europe were occupied in preparing original and critical editions of ancient works for publication.

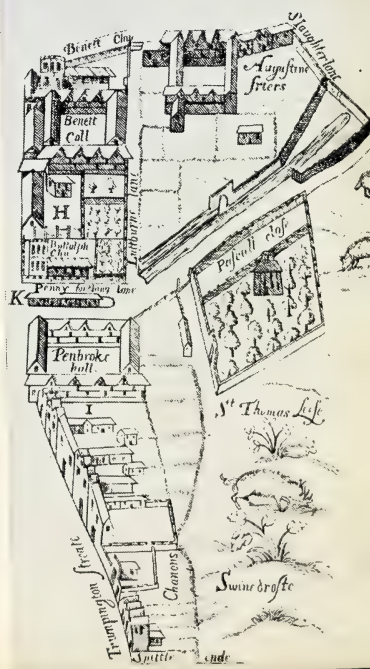
### POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE RENAISSANCE

In political theory and practice the Renaissance foreshadowed the modern age. In general, the dominance of ec-





The University of Bologna, Italy, began in the eleventh century as a group of student guilds. The professors usually lectured in their own homes. It is said that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were as many as ten thousand students in attendance, among whom were Dante and Petrarch. Today part of the University is housed in the former Poggi Palace (top left), a fine Renaissance building. (Courtesy of the ENIT.) The University of Salamanca, Spain (top right), founded in 1243, was celebrated throughout Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Here Columbus lectured on his discoveries and here the Copernican theory was taught long before it was generally accepted. As early as the fourteenth century the University of Paris had forty individual colleges. Directly above is a view of the Sorbonne, which was the college of theology, as it appeared in 1551. The University of Cambridge, England, developed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At the right is a section of a 1574 map of Cambridge showing Corpus Christi College.





non fuisse ausum affirmare se rapu-  
 in corpore sed diuile. siue in corpore si-  
 ne extra corp? nescio deus scit. Hys et  
 talibus argumentis apocryphas in li-  
 bro ecclesie fabulas arguebat. Super  
 qua re lectoris arbitrio iudiciu deditu-  
 quens illud amoneo non haberi da-  
 nielam apud hebreos inter prophetas:  
 sed inter eos qui agyographa conscri-  
 pserunt. In tres siquidem partes omnis  
 ab eis scriptura diuiditur: in legē in  
 prophetas et in agyographa id est  
 in quinq; et octo et undecim libros: de  
 quo nō est hui? tēporis disserere. Que  
 autē ē hęc ppheta. ymmo contra hūc  
 libru porphitica obiciat testes sunt  
 methodi? eusebii appollinaris: qui  
 multis uersū milibus eius uelanie re-  
 spōdēs nescio an curioso lectori sanc-  
 tificauit. Vnde obsecro uos o paula et  
 eusebiu fundatis p me ad dñm pre-  
 ces: ut quādiu i hęc corpulculo sū scri-  
 bā aliqd gratū uobis uale ecclesie: di-  
 gnū posteris. Presensū quippe iudiciū  
 oblatiū nō san? moueor: q̄ in utrā-  
 q; parte aut amore labun? aut odio.

**A**nno tertio regni io-  
 achim regis iude re-  
 nit nabuchodonos-  
 sor rex babilonis ihe-  
 rusalem et obsedit eā:  
 et tradidit dominus  
 in manu ei? ioachim regē iude et partē  
 uasoru domus dei ⁊ alportauit ea in  
 terra sennaar in domū dei sui: ⁊ uasa  
 intulit in domū thesauri dei sui. Et autē  
 rex affanez pposito eunuchis ut intro-  
 duceret de filiis isrl et de semine regio  
 et trānorū pueros i quibz nulla esset  
 macula decoros forma et eruditos o-  
 mni sapiēcia cautos scientia ⁊ doctos

disciplina: ⁊ qui possent stare in pala-  
 tio regis: ut doceret eos litteras et lin-  
 guam chaldeor. Et cōstituit eis rex an-  
 nonā per singulos dies de cibis suis  
 et uino unde bibebat ipse: ut emutui  
 tribz annis postea starent in cōspetu  
 regis. Fuerūt ergo inter eos ⁊ filii iu-  
 de daniel ananias misahel et azarias.  
 Et imposuit eis ppositus eunuchorū  
 nomina danieli balthazar: ananie  
 sidrac misaheli misac et azarie abde-  
 nago. Proposuit autē daniel in corde  
 suo ne pollueretur de mēsa regis neq;  
 de uino potus ei? ⁊ rogauit eunuchos  
 ppositū ne cōtaminaret. Dedit autē de-  
 us danieli gratiam et misericordiam  
 in cōspetu principis eunuchorū. Et ait  
 princeps eunuchorū ad daniēl. Timeo  
 ego dñm meū regē qui cōstituit uobis  
 cibū et potū: qui si uiderit uos  
 macilentiores pre ceteris adolescentibz  
 coeuis uestris: condemnabitis caput  
 meū regi. Et dixit daniel ad malasser  
 quē cōstituerat princeps eunuchorū su-  
 per daniēlem ananiā misahelē ⁊ aza-  
 riam. Tempta nos obsecro tuos uos  
 diebus decē et dētur nobis legumina  
 ad uestendū et aqua ad bidendum: ⁊  
 cōtemplare uultus nostros et uultus  
 pueros qui uestiuntur cibo regio: et si-  
 cut uideris facias cū seruis tuis. Qui  
 audito sermone huiusmodi tempta-  
 uit eos diebz decem. Post dies autē de-  
 cem apparuerūt uultus eorū meliores  
 et corpulentiores: pre omnibus pueris  
 qui uestiebantur cibo regio. Porro ma-  
 lasser tollebat cibaria et uinū potus e-  
 orum: dabatq; eis legumina. Pueris  
 autē hys dedit deus scientiā et discipli-  
 nam in omni libro et sapientiā: daniē-  
 li autē intelligentiā omnium uisionum  
 et somniorū. Completis itaq; diebus





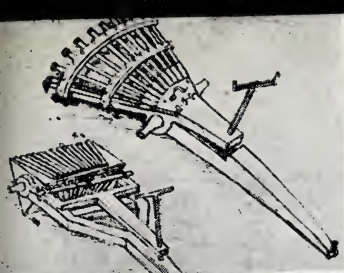
The Dutch engraving of a Renaissance printing shop (top) gives some idea of the equipment used and of the hand labor involved in early printing. The lower picture is a German engraving entitled *The Arts*, showing sculpture, writing, music, painting, and astronomy. Leon Battista Alberti, one of the greatest organists of his time, must have used just such an organ as is pictured here. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)





At the top is one of the frescoes in the church of Santa Croce, Florence—a scene from the life of St. John—by Giotto di Bondone (1266–1337), the precursor of the Renaissance. Giotto designed the bell tower of the Cathedral of Florence (bottom) and Brunelleschi the dome. Michelangelo (1475–1564) was painter, sculptor, architect, and poet. One of his greatest achievements was the painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in St. Peter's, Rome. The *Libyan Sybil*, one of the figures on this ceiling, is shown at the top right of the opposite page, and to the left of it is his preliminary chalk sketch, showing his careful study of anatomy. At the lower left is his great statue of *Moses* on the tomb of Pope Julius II. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), painter, sculptor, architect, musician, scientist, and engineer, epitomizes the whole spirit of the Renaissance. At the upper left and lower right are his sketches of two of his inventions—a machine gun and a flying machine. (*Sybil* sketch, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; other photos, courtesy ENIT.)









The Ponte Vecchio (top), which bridges the River Arno in Florence, was built in the fourteenth century. It has been lined with jewelry shops since that time, and a gallery passes over it leading to the Uffizi Palace. The Uffizi (second row, left) is a typical Renaissance city palace—massive, square, simple—with emphasis on horizontal lines so that the eye of the beholder stayed level with the earth, never looking heavenward as in medieval days. In contrast to the city palaces, the Italian country villas of the Renaissance were surrounded with picturesque gardens. The Villa d'Este, near Tivoli (second row, right), has the most beautiful gardens in Italy. There are elaborate terraces and staircases, and an intricate system of fountains. The Italians were proud of their cities and commissioned their greatest artists to decorate them. The statues in the Piazza della Signoria, which was the center of economic and political life in Florence during the Renaissance, include Michelangelo's *David* and Cellini's *Perseus slaying the Medusa* (left). (Courtesy of the ENIT.)





The Château of Chambord (top), built by Francis I, is perhaps the most celebrated of the Renaissance châteaux of France. It is built around a famous double staircase which spirals in such a way that a person going up would not meet a person coming down. Around the exterior of the central section of the building is a promenade from which the ladies of the court used to watch the hunt. In later times Louis XIV often used this château, and it was here that Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* was performed for the first time. The Doge's Palace in Venice (lower picture), seat of the Doge or chief magistrate, was started in 814. Several times it was destroyed by fire. The present edifice was built chiefly during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The upper story is a uniform pattern of white stone and red marble, which gives the building a glowing color. The Palace contains Tintoretto's *Paradise*, the largest oil painting in the world. (Courtesy of the ENIT.)





Pieter Bruegel, the Elder (1525-1569), a Fleming, has been called "the first of the Moderns." His colorful paintings of the life of the earth and of the men who belong to it, such as his *Harvesters* (top), are unsurpassed. His vast humanity is as pertinent today as it was nearly four hundred years ago. Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), a German, was akin to Leonardo in his spirit of research and has often been called "the Leonardo of the North." His greatest works were woodcuts and engravings. One of these, his *Three Peasants*, is reproduced at the lower left. Hans Holbein, the Younger (1497-1543), also a German, designed books, houses, signboards, jewelry, and stained glass; but his lasting achievement is his portraiture. At the lower right is his portrait of Lady Rich. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

clesiastical interests gave ground to the rising importance of the secular. In political thought, strong opposition developed to the medieval claims of papal political authority, and support was given instead to the pretensions of the rising secular princes. Theories of sovereignty were discussed that asserted the rights of princes, but at the same time, interestingly enough, limited royal authority by the theory that all governments rest upon the consent of the governed. The basis for this doctrine of popular liberties thinkers found in the ancient theory of natural rights. This conception of a political state in which authority is limited and the governed enjoy "natural rights" was eagerly seized upon in the modern period to justify transforming the absolute monarchies into constitutional governments.

#### **The development of political nationalism**

But neither during the Renaissance nor in the early centuries of modern times were these theories translated into fact. In political practice the dominant currents ran powerfully towards the development of national monarchies, in which the master hand was that of an absolute prince—the "strong man," who was largely the architect of the new national state. This rising tide of dynastic nationalism was, for future ages, perhaps the period's most significant political phenomenon. During the Renaissance, England, France, Spain, and Portugal achieved political unity under absolute kings. Italy was not so fortunate, divided as the peninsula was into strong city-states and the dominions of the Church. Central Europe likewise lagged far behind, its feudal houses still retaining the realities of sovereignty.

The rise of the national monarchies was clearly a revolt against the medieval theory of a universal state as broad as the frontiers of Christendom. Here, too, was a revolt against the localism or particularism exemplified in the medieval feudal states. Political integration—political enlargement—was the accepted order. The political influence of the medieval Church was fast diminishing. A prolonged development had begun in which the sense of a local corporate existence and a



local patriotism was to be swallowed up in the new conceptions of a more inclusive political community—the nation. Moreover, religious loyalties of the medieval period were to be transmuted into political loyalties; that is, loyalties to the new monarchies.

#### **Machiavelli and his theories of statecraft**

Among the political theorists, Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527) was the prophet of the new age. In the diplomatic service of Florence he had observed the methods of princes, popes, and emperors, the conditions of life among the Italian people, and especially the evils resulting from Italian weakness and inefficient political organization. He longed for Italian unity, that the Italian people might free themselves forever from the domination of Popes and from perpetual invasions by French kings and the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire. He declared that government by consent of the governed was the ideal form; but, being a realist, he saw the hopelessness of attaining such a goal under existing conditions in the Italian peninsula. And so he threw himself into the defense of the “strong man” as the great hope of liberation. With an objectivity which paid no heed to moral scruples, he outlined in two of his works, *The Prince* and *Discourses of the First Ten Books of Livy*, the way for a prince to get and keep a throne, and, once there, to build up a strong state and extend its boundaries. His illustrations were mostly drawn from Italian politics. In his mind the Church had no special claims to favorable treatment by ruling princes. It is the state which he considers so important that anything may be done for its good, the end justifying the means, the “reason of state” excusing cruelty, violence, and bad faith. For it was from the state that society derived the real benefits which Machiavelli esteemed. Here was a pattern followed by the early modern kings, even though they raised their voices in deprecation of Machiavellian statecraft. For during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the ruling princes accepted war as an instrument of policy—accepted it freely and without compunction.



## THE RENAISSANCE AND THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

## The growing worldliness of the Church

Religion inevitably felt the impact of secularism and individualism. Even among ecclesiastics paganism all too frequently replaced piety. The Roman Church fell under the sway of men of mundane interests. Spiritual guidance was abandoned by popes who ranged from serene viciousness to urbane worldliness, who were far more occupied in strengthening their political position as rulers of the Papal States or in patronizing scholars and artists and rebuilding the city of Rome than in attending to the religious needs of a new epoch. "Let us enjoy the Papacy," said Leo X (1513-1521), "now that God has given it to us."<sup>1</sup> With such leadership, many churchmen became permeated with impiety.

The story of St. Peter's Church in Rome may be taken to symbolize the condition of the Church. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the old St. Peter's was torn down to make way for a new edifice which should bear testimony in the grand manner to the glory of God and his Saints. When it came to constructing the new church, the ground plan, superstructure, and decorative details were changed again and again by successive chief architects appointed by a series of short-lived popes. Approximately a century after its beginnings, it was completed in its present form. Slight attention had been paid to liturgical requirements or religious feeling. It was, more especially, an edifice of splendor, with vast and impressive proportions and rich decorative detail, surmounted by Michelangelo's vigorous dome, faced by Bernini's flaring colonnade, and constructed, it must be said, at an enormous cost.

The growing worldliness of the Church did not go unheeded. In Italy itself, to be sure, the humanists were so engrossed in the literature and art of the classical culture and so far indifferent to the Church that they took little notice of what went on in the religious world about them. But elsewhere—

<sup>1</sup>J. A. Symonds, *The Revival of Learning*, p. 17.

in the German lands, in France, in Switzerland, and in England—the inquiring and critical temper of the time revealed itself in the examination of the documentary sources of Church history, in new translations of the Bible, and in efforts to reconstruct primitive, uncorrupted Christianity. Men like the Dutch humanist, Desiderius Erasmus; the German vagabond scholar, Ulrich von Hutten; and Sir Thomas More, a distinguished English lawyer—all contemporaries who lived during the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century—wrote works emphasizing the need of reform. Erasmus, particularly in his *Praise of Folly*, pilloried the clergy for their worldliness, sloth, ignorance, and superstition. They made it abundantly clear that the Church was no longer performing its basic function. Such influences, coupled with other powerful forces and interests, prepared the setting for a religious explosion.

### The revolt against the Church

But the religious explosion itself was not the work of the humanists; they had no desire for such an event.<sup>1</sup> The actual upheaval was the work mainly of pious churchmen reacting against a Church which had surrendered too far to the free and worldly spirit engendered by the Renaissance; and it may be said that one of the effects of their work was, in fact, to stimulate a renewed interest in certain medieval religious attitudes from which the Renaissance movement sought to free society. The leader of the movement which culminated in the Reformation was Martin Luther, a devout German priest, who was drawn into the controversy by his protest against the means employed to augment the papal treasury for the completion of St. Peter's church.

Out of this need for money arose a serious abuse of the Church's old custom of granting indulgences—an indulgence being a relief from penance granted to a repentant sinner by the authority of the pope. Under the pressure of an unusual demand for revenue, the indulgence tended to become a money

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<sup>1</sup>While this is not strictly true of Von Hutten, it was essentially a political, and not a religious, end which he wished to achieve.

commutation for penance, and in the early sixteenth century it was sold rather indiscriminately to sinners in no sense repentant, with very evil effects on the morals of the community which became a market for it. It was this abuse that excited Luther's protest, and led him at the same time to challenge the position of the Roman Church on certain other important matters. What looked at first like a harmless squabble between an obscure priest and the Roman Church rapidly developed into a widespread religious revolt. In defending his stand, Luther was led into a discussion of the relative authority of the individual human conscience and of the corporate inspiration of the Church. When Luther declared that not only the pope but even a church council could err in matters of religious faith, when he insisted that the ultimate guide was the informed human conscience, he took a truly individualistic stand which made of the Church a mere human auxiliary rather than an indispensable divine agent in the salvation of human souls. The Church could, perhaps, remain indifferent to his reforming zeal: it could not suffer its divine nature and supreme authority to be denied by one of its own priests. Luther was promptly declared a heretic, and when he refused to recant, became an object of persecution.

As an object of persecution he found himself a rallying point for thousands who seemed to be waiting for leadership. There came to his support those who found an interest in stripping the Church of some of its power and privileges—German nobles who desired the rich lands of the Church and political freedom from interference of pope and emperor, German knights who dreamed of giving political unity to the German peoples and creating a fatherland, thousands from the common ranks who sincerely sought religious and moral reform and relief from the heavy burden laid upon them in the form of church exactions. The Church had met with serious opposition in the past, but it had put it down with inflexible determination and, if need be, with ruthlessness. In the sixteenth century the seeds of revolt were too widely scattered. By insisting upon living for itself and its own worldly interests instead of ministering to the religious needs of its people,



the Church had fallen out of the affections and the respect of such great numbers that only by unprecedented exertion of force could the revolt be stopped. The decentralized political organization in Germany made it possible for Luther to obtain there protection against the Pope and the Emperor. The wars in Italy absorbed the energies of Emperor Charles V and prevented him from marshaling the might of the Church to stamp out the rebellion in its earlier stages.

#### **Establishment of the modern religious order**

The Protestant Reformation, spreading rapidly into Switzerland, France, England, and other parts of Europe, ushered in the modern religious order. Despite some success in regaining communicants, the Church had lost its medieval position. The unity of Christendom in western Europe was no more. Universalism in religion, the characteristic ideal of medieval Christianity, gave way to nationalism and individualism in this as in other fields. There were attendant difficulties. The individualistic tenets of Protestantism gave rise to constant disagreement over articles of belief. Frequent secessions and schisms led to new sects promoting varying interpretations of Biblical teaching. Religious bitterness and intolerance, civil wars of religion, and international conflicts reduced western Europe, through three centuries of suffering, to a realization that harmony must be found in the new and diverse society by admitting the right of differences in religious belief; that is to say, harmony through toleration. Only in the nineteenth century was the Protestant Reformation to bear its fruit of religious liberty based upon law; so far as individuals are concerned, religious intolerance is still a source of unhappiness and injustice.

#### **THE SPREAD OF THE RENAISSANCE OVER EUROPE**

Italy was the first part of Europe to experience the complex and extensive cultural transformation from the medieval to the modern. From Italy as the source and center, the New Learning and the new conception of the good life spread to

northern Europe, but the process was slow, and the results were extremely varied. During the fourteenth century traveling merchants, clergymen, and soldiers found their way back from Italy to northern towns and villages, with visible evidences and numerous tales of the new wonders they had observed. Students flocked from the North to the lecture-halls of Italian humanistic scholars in the fifteenth century, and built up later among their own people increasing knowledge of the classical past. A new spirit of intellectual freedom was generated by these studies.

Two events of major importance hastened the transmission of the new ideas. One was the introduction into western Europe, by the Mohammedans in Spain, of paper—a commodity first produced in China perhaps thirteen centuries before. The other was the invention of movable type for printing (about 1455), an invention attributed to Gutenberg of Mainz. Paper replaced the far more expensive parchment prepared from animal skins and, in connection with the printing press, made possible the production of books in numerous identical copies at a surprisingly lowered cost. In comparison with medieval conditions, it can be said that Europe was now flooded with the productions of its own greatest minds and of the outstanding writers of the ancient past. In France, Germany, England, the Low Countries, and Spain, the effect, in general, was to release energies, to kindle imagination, and to encourage change.

The New Learning was first carried to Germany, where, after 1440, it became the main concern of independent spirits among the scholars. It was never widely acceptable among Germans of all stations. The intellectual freedom, the reforming energies, and the new conception of the good life which it inspired remained confined principally to the field of religion. Aesthetic aspects of German civilization continued to be decidedly Gothic, despite the broader genius of Dürer. The Protestant Reformation therefore absorbed the German Renaissance.

In France, on the other hand, Italian models were widely utilized, both in the arts and also in manners, especially in

what became court etiquette. Among the men of letters, the summit of excellence was not reached until the sixteenth century in the writings of Rabelais and Montaigne, and in the great classical scholarship of such men as the Scaligers and Casaubon. Flemish and Dutch painting, having attained a high level of merit as early as the fifteenth century, rose to its greatest heights in the seventeenth century, with the work of Rubens, Van Dyck, and Rembrandt.

Like the Germans, the Spanish Renaissance scholars turned their zeal into religious fields. But instead of revolt, their objective was the purification and maintenance of the existing Church. Spain and Italy became the source of strength of the Catholic Counter Reformation. But in the arts, the seventeenth century was to produce the painting of El Greco and Velázquez; and in literature, the *Don Quixote* of Miguel de Cervantes.

The Renaissance in England was delayed by the country's involvement in wars with France and among its rival factions, Lancaster and York. Political advancement antedated comparable attainments in the intellectual and aesthetic fields. The full force of the New Learning and its attendant attitudes and energies came upon England almost simultaneously with the Reformation. The latter part of the sixteenth century, the Age of Elizabeth, the epoch of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Bacon, was the climax of England's slow response to the ferment of the Renaissance.

In Scandinavia, Russia, Poland, Bohemia, and the Balkans, the transition to modern civilization awaited the advent of later days. Religious wars, the restraints of Turkish Moslem rule, the absence of town life with the wealth of industry and trade—such influences negated the humanistic influence of the Renaissance and deferred the arrival of modern civilization.

### LEGACIES FROM THE RENAISSANCE

From the Renaissance Europe moved into the modern era somewhat more slowly than she had turned from the Middle



Ages, but whatever the Renaissance had discovered or rediscovered, the later age has either developed more fully or has abandoned. In politics, the national state of the Renaissance became the model for the rest of the world. In economic life, the new areas of the expanded world of Renaissance exploration became the basis of a commercial revolution and of great colonial development. Scholarship in letters has flagged, and so has artistic production, but natural science has been developed as never before. The scientific method has become the most extensively used instrument of knowledge; applied to the natural environment, it has yielded invention after invention through which natural forces and resources have been harnessed for man's material advancement.

The *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More and the *Atlantis* of Francis Bacon reflect the combined Renaissance influences of scholarship, geographical discovery, and optimism for the future. Since their day, perfect societies have been pictured by many authors. Before them, such societies were thought of as remote in time, back in the Golden Age. In their day, they were remote in distance, out in some undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns. Of late, Utopias, having failed whenever attempted in nineteenth-century Europe and America, are placed by imaginative writers at some point far distant in space, on some undiscovered planet from which no rocket-airship ever makes its way again to earth. Some twentieth-century Utopians have been captivated by Bacon's dream of human progress through the discoveries of science. They picture an age when science shall have eased the burden of human labor and set men free, with an abundance of time to enjoy the best of all possible worlds which science is to create. But happiness still eludes mankind.

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## TABLE III

### SOME HISTORICAL LANDMARKS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION DURING THE MODERN PERIOD TO 1870

#### IN EUROPE

**1600**

Beginning of the modern period, the period of the Old Order.

**1618-1648**

(1) The Thirty Years' War; (2) beginnings of modern international law with the work of Grotius (1625); (3) the Conference of Westphalia (1648); (4) emergence of the modern states-system.

**1661-1715**

The Age of Louis XIV of France.

**1688**

The "bloodless" Revolution in England, the end of absolutism in England, and the development of parliamentary government.

**1760**

Beginning of the Industrial Revolution in England.

**1789**

Beginning of the French Revolution, followed by the overthrow of the Old Order in France.

**1799-1815**

(1) The period of Napoleon and the Napoleonic wars; (2) the final defeat of Napoleon (1815); (3) the Congress of Vienna (1814-15).

**1830**

(1) The Paris Revolution in France; (2) the spread of the revolutionary movement to Belgium, central Italy, and to a number of German states.

**1830's**

(1) First great reform period in England; (2) the spread of the Industrial Revolution to the European continent.

#### IN THE NEW WORLD

**Seventeenth Century**

(1) Continuance of the colonial movement—England, France, and Holland join Spain and Portugal in the competitive struggle for trade and colonies; (2) the development of mercantilism; (3) laying of the foundations of the British Empire—occupation of India, planting of colonies on North American continent and in the Caribbean area.

**1700-1763**

(1) Struggle between France and England in North America and India; (2) Treaty of Paris (1763) by which England gained Canada and India.

**1775-1783**

(1) The War for American Independence followed by the establishment of the American Republic; (2) the beginning of the Age of Revolution (1775).

**1810-1825**

(1) Wars for independence in Latin America, followed by the emergence of independent states in Mexico, Central America, and South America; (2) enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine (1823); (3) trans-Allegheny expansion of the United States.

**1830's**

(1) Beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the United States, followed by the development of machine industry and of communication by canal and railroad; (2) westward expansion continues.



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civilization, if we measure it on a basis of cultural advancement; and its two great focal points were Rome and Constantinople. In the modern period the significant fact is that the Mediterranean area declines in its relative importance and loses its preëminence; European society turns about, so to speak, and faces westward; the countries along the Atlantic seaboard rise steadily to positions of wealth, power, and influence; and the outstanding focal points of activity shift westward and northward to centers like Paris, London, Berlin, St. Petersburg (now Leningrad), and New York City. Rome and Constantinople continued to be centers of importance and influence, but their *relative* importance had greatly declined.

### **Some geographic factors in modern civilization**

How is this shift in leadership to be accounted for? Anything like a complete answer to the question would require an examination of a number of historical forces involved in the change, but geographic factors were of basic importance, and it is those influences we wish to consider.

The discoveries of Vasco da Gama, Columbus, and others during the late years of the fifteenth century and the early part of the sixteenth led to what is called a Commercial Revolution, but the term should not obscure the fact that they also led to a revolution in the geographic environment of European society.<sup>1</sup> That new geographic environment opened up new treasures in the way of natural resources which could be drawn upon for the material and cultural enrichment of European society, especially of those national societies in a position to exploit the newly discovered resources.

Hitherto it had been countries bordering on the Mediterranean, particularly Italian communities, that had been most advantageously situated to profit from the resources of non-European lands, mainly of the Near and Far East. But that monopoly was now gone, and the advantage shifted to the states along the Atlantic, which possessed the additional advantage of greater wealth and power to support maritime and colonial activity on an oceanic scale, both in the Far East and

<sup>1</sup>Compare Maps 15 and 16.



in the New World. The rise to position and power of Portugal, Spain, Holland, France, and Great Britain in the early modern period is to be explained largely in terms of the re-orientation in commercial activity following the great geographical changes of the sixteenth century. The excellent harbors on the Atlantic coast were now utilized as never before; and navigable rivers like the Loire, the Seine, the Rhine, and the Elbe extended commercial activity deep into the European continent.

The opening up of new geographical areas influenced Western civilization in other important particulars during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, as will be shown later. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a fundamental change in industrial methods of production—the substitution of machine power for handicrafts—brought into operation still other geographic factors that help to explain the decline in importance of the Mediterranean area in modern civilization.

The change from handicrafts to machine power—called the Industrial Revolution—increased to an incalculable degree man's power to produce wealth; but the change depended in the first instance upon the availability of abundant supplies of coal and, to a less extent, iron and other metals. The new industrial age of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was to be built on fuels and metals. Hence it followed that countries not adequately supplied would be at a disadvantage in industrializing their economic life and obtaining its rich rewards. The Mediterranean area on the European side is at a disadvantage in this respect. The civilizations which had flourished there in ancient and medieval times were fundamentally agricultural, although their wealth was supplemented by hand industry and commerce. It will be recalled that this was true of the civilizations of the Near East, of Greece, and of Italy—the seat of the Roman Empire. These regions are now almost entirely without coal, and have limited supplies of iron and other metals.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, the countries of western

<sup>1</sup>It is true that we think of modern Italy as an industrial country, but her industrial development is seriously limited and retarded, principally through the

and northern Europe are, with some exceptions, well supplied with coal and iron. Here, then, we have another basic geographic influence that must be taken into account in explaining the transfer of the focal centers of Western civilization from the southeast Mediterranean to the countries of western and northern Europe and to North America. Accountable also is the more invigorating climate of the northern and western areas.<sup>1</sup>

### Three periods of modern civilization

The choice of 1600 as a convenient beginning point in modern history is far from arbitrary. By the opening of the seventeenth century, European civilization had come to bear, at least in certain fundamental aspects, a sufficiently close resemblance to that of our own times to make it look somewhat familiar to us in retrospect. The dominating influence of religious institutions was in retreat; interest in the world of material and living things and in science was on the ascent. The political localism of the feudal age, the imperial conception of a universal state, and the religious conception of a universal church were all fading into the past over a considerable part of Europe; the national state had emerged, placing its familiar stamp on both political and religious institutions. The Renaissance had introduced new interests, standards, and guides that continued to affect the intellectual and artistic currents of modern society. The great highway of the ancient and medieval world, the Mediterranean, had yielded precedence to the great highway of the modern world, the Atlantic; the new continents had been discovered, the globe had been circumnavigated, and the world geographically had begun to take on the appearance it bears today.

The changes that had taken place or were in progress by the beginning of the seventeenth century do not wholly explain

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lack of coal. This lack has been compensated for to a considerable extent by the development of electrical power, but even so, Italian industry continues to be greatly hampered by the absence of natural resources requisite to extensive industrial development. This fact explains in part Italy's imperialist venture in Abyssinia and her military intervention in Spain, 1936-39.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 99-100.













the transformed state of civilization today. Change has continued down to the present. It might be said that during the whole period that we call *modern* we have been in process of becoming modern, slowly sloughing off elements of medieval institutions, methods of doing things and earning a living, modes of behavior, and habits of thought. Progress has not been uniform; down to the middle of the eighteenth century society moved comparatively slowly. The time was not yet ripe for a full realization of the rich promises of the Renaissance. Amid signs of a new era there were currents of reaction. Then, in the eighteenth century, there began a remarkable period that we may call the Age of Revolution. Ideas that had lain dormant since the Renaissance again became dynamic; medieval institutions, traditions, and attitudes were challenged on all sides; society rose to sweep outworn modes from its path, and by reform or violent revolutions to construct a new social order on the basis of new conceptions in politics, religion, and economics. But even then the goal was not to be won in a day. Conservatism and reaction struggled desperately to preserve ancient privileges and ancient ways, so that the whole nineteenth century witnessed in this or that part of the Western world the conflict between the old and the new.

It is evident, then, that we cannot generalize over the whole modern period when we describe modern civilization. We can distinguish three periods: (1) the period of the Old Order, (2) the Age of Revolution, (3) the Bourgeois Era. The Western world before the Age of Revolution presents a civilization widely different from the civilization that emerged under the middle class—the bourgeoisie, as it is called—during the second half of the nineteenth century. We therefore have really two civilizations to consider during the modern period. The Age of Revolution—the interval between the Old Order and the Bourgeois Era—may be regarded as a transitional period. Dates attached to these periods must be accepted with caution, for the cultural changes set going during the period of revolution did not affect all parts of Europe at the same time or with the same force. We shall, more or less arbitrarily, place the Old Order in the period between

1600 and the beginning of the American Revolution in 1775. The Bourgeois Era may be said to begin in the 1870's, for by that time the middle class had largely come into political control; it reached its climax in the years preceding the World War, and appears now to be in a state of decline.<sup>1</sup> (For chronology of modern period see Tables III (p. 335) and IV (p. 374)).

### THE CIVILIZATION OF THE OLD ORDER

#### Economic aspects

Economic life during this interval before the Age of Revolution was less homogeneous than during the Middle Ages. Alterations in medieval practices were not uniform over Europe. By and large, they were most evident in countries along the Atlantic seaboard where commercial life was stirring most vigorously. Even there the picture of economic society retains many medieval features, but within the economic structure itself the Commercial Revolution of the sixteenth century had introduced influences that first modified and later destroyed surviving medieval practices. Within the Old Order medieval and modern forces were already contending for survival.

Agriculture was perhaps least disturbed, except in such countries as The Netherlands and England, and in parts of France. A serf of the twelfth century returned to earth in almost any other part of Europe would have found little change in rural society. He would have found the bulk of the inhabitants still living in villages, still bound to the soil, held to the monotonous routine of the manorial system. He would have found no perplexity on taking his place by the side of these "modern" tillers of the soil. He would have seen clumsy tools like those he had used six hundred years earlier; he would have found himself familiar with the crops and the methods of tillage and with the services exacted by the landlord.

Only in a few spots in seventeenth-century Europe would a member of the medieval burgher class have found much to ex-

<sup>1</sup>It is likely that historians of the future will distinguish a third epoch in the development of "modern" civilization, emerging in the period since the World War.

cite his wonder in the towns. The old familiar sights and odors would have greeted his senses. He would have found the towns somewhat larger, with the population here and there spreading out beyond the old medieval walls. The burghers in the market place and on the dirty streets would have been more numerous and more prosperous, but otherwise they would have appeared much as he had known them in his own day. In a coast town he would have wondered at the large and more splendid ships, at the increased activity along the wharves, and at certain strange cargoes brought from lands not even dreamed of in his day. But he would have seen much to reassure him if he had looked into the shops; there he would have seen apprentices, journeymen, and masters working at the bench in the old medieval fashion with much the same kind of hand tools, and under the same sort of guidance of the guilds. Could he have pried into the mysteries of commerce he would have found much to astonish him, but to the casual eye this "modern" world would have looked, not modern, but strikingly medieval, so far as its industrial life was concerned.

Nevertheless, a more penetrating eye might have discovered new factors in the economic life of the early modern period destined to be of great significance in history. Since the Commercial Revolution, the burgher class was coming to assume much greater importance in society. Capital was rapidly accumulating with the expansion of commerce. A new financial class of bankers was emerging, merchants were becoming rich. Growing wealth among the business classes meant growing influence and power. As history was to show, this bourgeois class was soon to be in a position to mold economic and political institutions in accordance with their own interests and ideals.

### Political changes

A feudal lord making a pilgrimage back to earth in the seventeenth century would not have found the modern world so reassuring. Society in general would have been quite to his liking: a small minority of nobles born into numerous privi-



leges and favored with exemptions and still possessing their great estates; a vast majority of common folk born to labor for their support and in most places, as serfs, still furnishing the customary services they had performed in the Middle Ages. Despite these indications of continued dignity and prestige, however, he would have discovered signs of disturbing alterations in the position of grandeur which the nobility had once maintained. He would have found that in important particulars the landed aristocracy was but a shadow of its former self.

Politically, the feudal age had run its course. Strong national monarchies had been established in England, France, Spain, and Portugal. In the states of Central Europe, it is true, a national monarchy had not been set up, and the Holy Roman Empire had become little more than a name, the emperor hardly more than a figurehead; but even here powerful princes were autocrats in their own realms. In Italy the city-states still flourished, but the feudal nobility could find no place as a class under the political order there. Neither could they in the republic of Holland and in Switzerland, both of which had entered the family of national states in 1648. The feudal armies of the nobles had passed; nobles and knights could no longer achieve glory and power in feudal wars. And with the loss of his military power the noble had lost political authority as well. So it had become the rule in the seventeenth century that princes governed, not in theory merely, but in fact. Armies were now armies of the prince, and the king's peace—the law and order of the prince—was established in society.

Such were the changes that had come over political Europe, distinguishing the modern from the medieval age. The prince imagined by Machiavelli had become in large measure a reality on the thrones of Europe. The earlier political ideas of the Renaissance thinkers—ideas of equality, of natural rights, of government by consent—had not yet obtained a foothold in practical politics. Only in England was absolutism seriously disputed. On the Continent the prince was the state. The Church and the feudal nobility, the two forces that frequently had limited his power in the Middle Ages, were now mastered.

Within the royal person was vested all political and military power; he largely dictated the religion of his subjects; he invaded the economic activity of the people by imposing a mass of regulations on agriculture, industry, and commerce. This was a momentous change. It meant that the local economy of the Middle Ages had disappeared in a more inclusive national economy. This paternalistic policy was based on an economic theory called mercantilism. Mercantilism taught that national prosperity, in general, and the prosperity of the prince in particular, could be achieved only by the development of an economically self-supporting state.<sup>1</sup> This complete and many-sided authority of the ruling prince was supported and secured by the accepted theory of divine right. Royal power was said to be bestowed by God himself; to revolt against it was not merely treason but an affront to religion and to God.

### Religious changes

In religion, as in politics, the Old Order is in strong contrast to the Middle Ages. The unity of Christendom in the West, which had characterized the Middle Ages, had been destroyed by the Protestant Revolt; and Europe was not only divided between Catholic and Protestant, but Protestant Europe was subdivided into at least three major forms of religious faith—Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican. At the same time the whole religious map of Europe was shaded by the rise of independent monarchies, for everywhere, in Protestant and Catholic countries alike, churches were becoming national churches, joined in a powerful union with the state. There had been many common men who had dreamed that the religious revolution was to mean religious liberty and tolerance. But like some other dreams of the Renaissance intellectuals, no such result was to be realized for a long time to come. With a fear of the demoralizing effect of religious individualism came reaction. Princes were quick to anticipate disorder from religious tolerance, and as quick to recognize the political advantage of religious uniformity together with an obedient clergy to inculcate reverence and passive obedience

<sup>1</sup>For a more complete exposition of mercantilism, see pp. 484 f.

among the people. So the guiding principle was accepted that "he who has the rule has the religion." In consequence, with a few exceptions, the period is marked by religious intolerance and persecution. Liberty of conscience was still a prize to be won.

### **Intellectual activity**

As one pictures the depressing effect of the reassertion of authority by Church and State, he is likely to conclude that intellectual activity during the early modern period must have felt a crushing weight. That is true in some respects. It is hardly to be expected that the Renaissance ideal of liberating the human intellect should have found a hospitable reception. With Church and State joined in sympathetic partnership to preserve the existing order of things, it is understandable that the expression of men's thoughts and feelings should be suppressed by a strict censorship, lest such thoughts and feelings become seriously critical of existing traditions and institutions. The publication of objectionable works was generally forbidden, and frequently objectionable books, once published, were burned. Even in England, where there had been greater progress toward liberty than on the Continent, a system for licensing publications was maintained until well toward the end of the seventeenth century.

Holland offered a conspicuous exception to the rule. Once Holland had freed herself from the Spanish yoke at the beginning of the seventeenth century, she became the refuge of intellectuals who feared to publish their thoughts at home. It was there that John Locke, an English philosopher, lived for five years in exile, formulating the philosophical ideas for later writings which were to help turn society upside down in the eighteenth century. When Louis XIV (1643-1716) of France was preparing to make war on the Calvinists, Pierre Bayle, a Protestant, left his own country to settle in The Netherlands for the purpose of writing in support of religious toleration. It was in The Netherlands that the French philosopher Descartes produced his notable works advocating the importance of reason in the advancement of human knowledge.



And there also lived the great philosopher Spinoza, driven from his own Jewish community for his liberality of thought. While his hands were busy grinding lenses, his mind was busy with thoughts for his philosophical works, in which a dominant theme was intellectual freedom as a requisite of human progress. But even Holland could at times be oppressive enough, for she drove her famous son Hugo Grotius from his native land because of his liberal views on religion and his opposition to the Stadholder. Thus it was that his great work *On the Law of War and Peace* was written and published not in The Netherlands but in Paris, 1625.

Though the institutions of the Old Order sought to safeguard themselves against dangerous innovations, there were numerous avenues sufficiently open to intellectual and artistic achievement to make the age notable in a number of respects. Even in the realm of ideas antagonistic to the existing order, attempts at suppression did not always succeed, for in the eighteenth century, notably in France, opposing currents of thought rose to flood tide and overwhelmed the old regime.

If we look for a unifying characteristic in the intellectual life of the period—in literature, in art, in science—we shall find it most clearly revealed in the mental attitudes toward life and culture introduced into European society during the Renaissance. In general, the orientation of intellectual society toward classical civilization persists, along with a continued depreciation of the attitudes and achievements of the Middle Ages. This continued enthusiasm and veneration for Greek and Roman culture makes *classicism* a dominant feature of the intellectual life of the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century. In other words, the impulse and the direction given to thought and to art in the Renaissance continued with sufficiently clear indications in the early modern period to give the term *classicism* particular significance.

#### Literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Literature may be regarded as "a reflection of life—a many-sided mirror which catches and holds for us a picture of changing interests, activities, and ideals of man through the genera-

tions." So the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries proves to be responsive to the changing currents of interest and thought, as we pass from the earlier century to the later revolutionary period. This fact will become clear as we move through the period of the Old Order to the closing years of the eighteenth century.

The writers of the seventeenth century carried on the spirit of the Renaissance. As we have seen, the literature of the Renaissance reveals the shifting of emphasis from the other-worldliness of the Middle Ages to man and his achievements on earth. Convinced of the intrinsic importance of his present life irrespective of the possible future life of the soul, man sought the means by which he might develop, enrich, and adorn his present life. In the quest he turned back to the great literatures of Greece and Rome as the fullest sources of the new ideals. Thus he introduced into modern literature the classical influence. On the eve of the seventeenth century Ben Jonson set the goal for the literary world when he said, "I know nothing can conduce more to letters than to examine the writings of the ancients, and not to rest in their sole authority or take all on trust from them. . . . It is true they opened the gates, and made the way that went before us; but as guides, not commanders." As guides they furnished much, not only of substance, but also of form—such as the style and structure of the epic, of drama, of satirical poetry—which was mingled variously with elements inherited from the Middle Ages to form distinctively new and modern literature whose permanent significance is incontestable, and such as to place it securely amongst the highest achievements of the human race.

Early in the seventeenth century the great creative period of the Renaissance drew to a close.<sup>1</sup> Classical standards continued, but literature fell under the influence of the cold spirit of rationalism. Rationalism extolled man's reason as the key to all enlightenment and human progress. The prevailing tone thus introduced into literature with its measured restraint

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<sup>1</sup>In England, the work of John Milton (1608-1674) proves to be an exception to the prevailing trend.

and emphasis on literary form rather than ideas contrasted with the fervor and the freer reign given to the imagination and the emotions during the earlier creative period of the Renaissance. Rationalism imposed upon literature a narrow formalism requiring meticulous attention to the canons of style laid down by the French, who then were setting the literary pattern for Europe. Under the influence of this early modern classicism writers laid much emphasis on form and literary polish. Much of the literature is marked by frequent classical allusions and by a striving for effect through the frequent use of figures of speech, lofty diction, and high-flown language.

The national literature of France and of England stands far out in front of the literary achievements of all other nations during this period.

France most completely exemplifies the prevailing literary characteristics of the age. In the first third of the seventeenth century men devoted themselves to making French the most elegant language in the world. Words and phrases were played with, weighed, and examined for their literary worth. The French Academy was founded presently with the aim, in part, of purging the French language of all impurities. When the great epoch of Louis XIV (1661-1715) arrived, France had already entered a golden age of literature graced by a brilliant assembly of literary lights: Boileau, poet and critic, who did much to fix the standards in poetic style; La Fontaine, a notable poet but best known popularly for his *Fables*; Pascal, philosopher and master of prose style; Corneille and Racine, greatest of French dramatists in the classical tradition; and Molière, equally great in the field of comedy—a list to which the names of many minor writers could be added.

Shakespeare died in England in 1616. His last dramas, some of his best, gave to the opening years of the seventeenth century a fleeting sense of the creative power of the Renaissance. With his death English drama declined and flickered out—not to be restored until after 1660, and then in the spirit of a new literary age. But England's greatest literary fame during the second half of the seventeenth century does not rest upon the drama; it rests in large measure upon one of the



most notable writers of England and of the modern world—John Milton, whose fame is bound up imperishably with *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. Yet the literary age that immediately follows Milton most completely displays the qualities of the early modern classicism, for it was after 1660 that French influence was most pronounced in England. A mere mention can be made of other names that added to England's reputation during the long interval: the poets, Dryden and Pope; the essayists, Addison and Steele; the greatest English satirist, Jonathan Swift; the novelists, Fielding, Richardson, Defoe, and Smollett; and finally, Samuel Johnson, prose writer, poet, and critic. Johnson exercised a decisive influence on the English literary world for a generation. He sums up the period of classicism in England, for he was its most powerful exponent; yet, when he died in 1784, the currents of a new literary age were running strong in Europe.

This new age is today commonly called the Romantic Revival or the Romantic Movement. It came as a revolt against the restrictive formalism and the artificiality of the modern classicism, and it set in motion forces that changed the character of literature in the closing period of the eighteenth and the opening decades of the nineteenth century. It belongs to what we have called the Age of Revolution, and will receive mention later.

### Early modern art<sup>1</sup>

In the development of architecture the seventeenth century shows a departure from the true Renaissance style. Its creative period had run out, and its original vigor and freedom were destroyed by a mass of regulations and rigid standards imposed by such architects and writers as the Italian Palladio.<sup>2</sup> The attempts of architects to regain their freedom in design contributed to the creation of the so-called baroque style. An outstanding characteristic of the *baroque* is a fan-

<sup>1</sup>For much of the information included in the brief exposition of painting and architecture in this and the following chapter the author is indebted to Sheldon Cheney's *A World History of Art* (Viking Press, 1937), and to Richard Hamann's *Geschichte der Kunst* (Berlin, 1933).

<sup>2</sup>See p. 316.

tastic over-elaboration of decoration and ornament. It lent itself particularly to palace and theater architecture, but was extensively used in the construction of churches as well. By some writers the baroque is regarded as being more of a style of decoration and ornamentation than of building construction. At any rate it was widely followed in the embellishment of the interiors of royal palaces and other public buildings; even churches built much earlier in the Gothic style were sometimes given baroque interiors. Sculpture, too, felt the influence of the baroque; the Italian Lorenzo Bernini was its most famous exponent.

Of the baroque style Sheldon Cheney says: ". . . A few architects—then sculptors, then painters—recognized a certain fitness in the curved line and the swelling form, an appropriateness to the regal pretensions of king and bishop, and they saw a chance to dramatize contemporary life in their own way. They measurably tamed the style and left many churches and a few palaces that please the discriminating eye; along with a very little sculpture—and Rubens's painting."<sup>1</sup>

In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century painting notable contributions are as unequally divided as were the contributions to literature. In the brief mention that can be made here attention will be confined to the most important countries. Italy may be omitted, for there there was a sharp decline from the splendid heights reached during the Renaissance. In German lands no one arose to match the art of Dürer and Holbein.<sup>2</sup> For the seventeenth century France may be omitted, since despite the presence of numerous painters no contributions of high order were made. England's record is almost a blank page until the second half of the eighteenth century. Leadership in notable art was taken by Spain, the Spanish Netherlands (now Belgium), and the Dutch Netherlands (Holland) until the eighteenth century, when France again became important.

The Renaissance influence was slow in reaching Spain and never dominated Spanish art. The free spirit of Renaissance Italy in the realm of art was curbed in Spain by the deeply re-

<sup>1</sup>Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art*, pp. 732 f.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 331.

ligious character of the nation and by the watchful care exercised by church authorities who laid down strict regulations regarding the subject matter of painting. The Spanish court, strongly under religious influence, was the center about which most of the art revolved. Much of the painting was executed in the service of the court and the Church. These circumstances explain the religious and the aristocratic note that prevails in the painting of the period.

After El Greco, whose great contributions to painting belong to the sixteenth century, the best-known painter of Spain was Velázquez—Spanish born, court painter to Philip IV, and, at his best, one of the greatest of portrait painters. An intensely industrious worker, he executed many portraits of Philip, a notable painting of Pope Innocent X, and other portraits. In addition, he painted many pictures of religious subjects and some scenes from everyday life. The popularity of Velázquez in his own time was largely eclipsed by the rising fame of Murillo, the emotional qualities of whose work have made strong appeal to later generations, an appeal that arises, Cheney thinks, from the "sweetness" and "prettiness" of Murillo's treatment rather than from inherent strength. He found his subject matter in the stories of religion—in Madonnas, the Christ child, saints, the holy family; and in the life of street gamins and beggar boys to whom he gave a strong sentimental appeal. There were other Spanish painters worthy of notice during this period, but none of great note until the coming of Goya late in the eighteenth century.

During the years that Velázquez was rising to fame in Madrid another painter had reached a high place in art in the southern Netherlands, then a possession of the Spanish kings. The artist was Peter Paul Rubens. The Spanish Netherlands were devoutly Catholic, and it was in a religious atmosphere, under the influence of the Spanish court, that Rubens was brought up. His work is described as a most complete exemplification of the *baroque* style in painting.<sup>1</sup> In painting he managed to blend ecclesiastical and material sub-

<sup>1</sup>The term "baroque," which we first encountered in its application to architecture, is sometimes applied generally to the painting of the seventeenth and



jects so as to glorify the body in its mass, texture, and movement. He made rich use of color and of formal arrangement, with a preference for opulent curves and vigorous diagonals. Rubens moved in the highest circles of society; he was a diplomat and a courtier, and easily acquired the aristocratic tastes that reveal themselves in his art. He was a prodigious producer and versatile artist who found subjects for his canvases in many fields of human interest.

Rubens's chivalrous and graceful characteristics came out rather mechanically in his pupil Van Dyck, native of Antwerp. Van Dyck reached a high point of popularity in portrait painting. He was made court painter to Charles I of England, and his work had considerable influence on English painting in the eighteenth century. As was the case with his master, Van Dyck's tastes and connections were aristocratic, and it is aristocrats who look out from many of his canvases.

When we pass from the Spanish Netherlands to Holland we find a sharply different social setting and a different kind of art. Holland was republican and Protestant, and Dutch art, the opposite of courtly and ecclesiastical formalism, was an art in which the *naturalism* of Renaissance painting appears—that is, an emphasis upon very human, nonreligious interests, with no apology for the body and its appetites. As the artists of the Reformation had brought the representation of saints down to the human level, so Franz Hals and other Dutch artists now revolted against the proud absolutism of princes and courts. Common people were depicted eating, drinking, and enjoying life in a familiar setting. The plain, the homely, was played up. Even the ugly was preferred to anything idealized or glorified. The grandiose themes of traditional art were deliberately parodied. A brawl took the place of a battle scene; unlovely nakedness was exposed as a caricature of godlike nudity; or an unfortunate man undergoing an operation, in place of a martyr crowned by angels.

But this mood of protest and revolt did not last in Holland.

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eighteenth centuries. It is used to describe a quality of painting obtained by an emphasis on diagonal lines and by light effects which lend an exciting emotional appeal to the picture.

Rembrandt, by means of his contrasting dark-and-light method, learned to express human feelings and relationships with irresistible warmth and inwardness. A host of Dutch painters discovered as rich a play of light and color in costumes and furnishings of the home as had ever been admired in palaces. But, not content with sensuous surfaces, the Dutch masters developed an intellectual pleasure in patterned gradations of light and color—regardless of what they happened to be representing. Of the numerous Dutch artists who followed Rembrandt none made important contributions, and in the eighteenth century Dutch painting thinned out to a temporary oblivion.

Though the French did not distinguish themselves in painting in the seventeenth century, some mention should be made of court art when court art truly came into its own in the most ceremonious court of Europe, during the years when French absolutism stood at the top of its glory under the Grand Monarch, Louis XIV. Like a magnet the court drew all art within the orbit of its influence; but all art, including the literature of Corneille, Racine, and Molière, was subordinated to the palace architecture. The great palace at Versailles was set in fantastically elaborate gardens. There was dignity and restraint in the outside walls, but the interior was embellished even beyond the baroque, so that the new name of *rococo* was invented for it. The envy of European princes, the French court became the model for other courts well into the eighteenth century. It was a reaction to rococo artificiality that produced one current in the revolt leading to the French Revolution.

The artificiality, the aristocratic tone, and the atmosphere of gaiety, frivolity, and voluptuousness of the French court are reflected in much of the French painting of the eighteenth century prior to the Revolution. The canvases present pastoral views, court social life, nudes in great profusion, and portraits of aristocrats. Prominent among the painters were Watteau, Boucher, Nattier, and Fragonard. Amid this fashionable company one artist stands out oddly in his aloofness to the influences of rococo artificiality and his complete devotion to the

homely life and activity of the common people of his day. The artist was Jean-Baptiste Chardin, son of a cabinetmaker of Paris. His work, long overlooked, is now highly prized for its genuine artistic merit. Some of the painting of the last years preceding the Revolution is historically interesting as a reflection of the growing bourgeois influence on French art.

In the last half of the eighteenth century England found a place in European painting. Earlier, almost all painting in England had been executed by artists borrowed from the continent—among them Rubens and Van Dyck—and their work had all been in the field of portrait painting, portraits of royalty and gentry. Into this England of imported foreign masters came the first notable English artist of the eighteenth century, William Hogarth, born in 1697. Thoroughly English, he disdained Continental art and artists. He produced an art of his own in paintings and engravings making fun of aristocratic elegance and satirizing the degraded life of English society. Best known perhaps of such works are *The Rake's Progress* and *The Harlot's Progress*. With the rise of a group of English portrait painters beginning with Sir Joshua Reynolds, England drew closer to Continental traditions, for Reynolds and Gainsborough imitated Van Dyck's aristocratic style. As Hamann points out, however, they did add their own feeling for family scenes, for dramatic heroines, for the innocence of children, and for fine ladies disguised as farm girls or serving maids; and thus were on the way toward a new naturalism. Two other names, less notable, should be added to the portrait painters: Romney and Lawrence. To portraiture, so long the only popular form of painting in England, we must add landscape painting, which was given an important place in English art by Wilson and Constable and was made famous by Turner. Turner's work belongs to the nineteenth century and will be noticed again in connection with that period.

Before completing this abbreviated list of late eighteenth-century painters we must return to Spanish art to make mention of one of Spain's greatest painters, Francisco Goya, whose work extends into the nineteenth century. Goya was a court



painter who held his place, despite numerous romantic escapades shocking to Spanish royalty, by reason of the high excellence of his work as an artist. He departed from the traditions of the Spanish art of his time and deeply influenced painters in a later period. The subjects of his art cover a wide range: subjects drawn from religion; nudes; portraits that penetrate and reveal the very character of his subjects; and representations of the life of Spain in both its graceful and its ugly aspects.

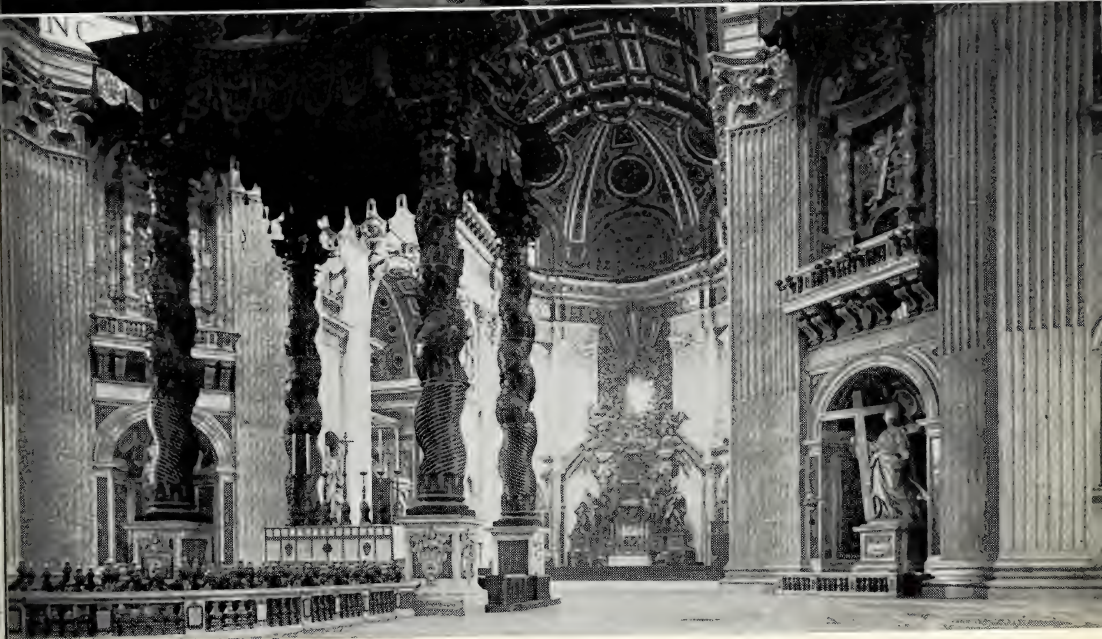
### Music in the early modern period<sup>1</sup>

During the transition from medieval to modern civilization music, like the other arts, underwent notable changes. Medieval music emanated from one source—the Church; it was sacred music devoted to the Christian religion and was exclusively voice music, universal over Christendom with a universal language—Latin. Music during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was influenced in its development from numerous national centers, was secular as well as sacred, instrumental as well as vocal, and took three principal forms—opera, oratorio, and instrumental music.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the invention of new musical instruments and the improvement of instruments already in use. With these developments began the secular instrumental music we have today. The oratorio, a form of sacred music, began in Italy and was so named because it developed from a form of sacred drama first performed in the *oratory* of a church. Opera represents a divorce of singing from the church. It appeared first in Italy and then in France. Opera was not so much an art of the people as of the court, as can be seen from the very architecture of opera houses—built to show off the fine clothes in the boxes even more than the figures on the stage.

In the eighteenth century came the great German composers: Bach, Händel, Glück, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. There seems to be a connection between this prodigious flow-

<sup>1</sup>For this brief account the author is largely indebted to *The Story of Music* by Paul Bekker (W. W. Norton and Company, 1927).



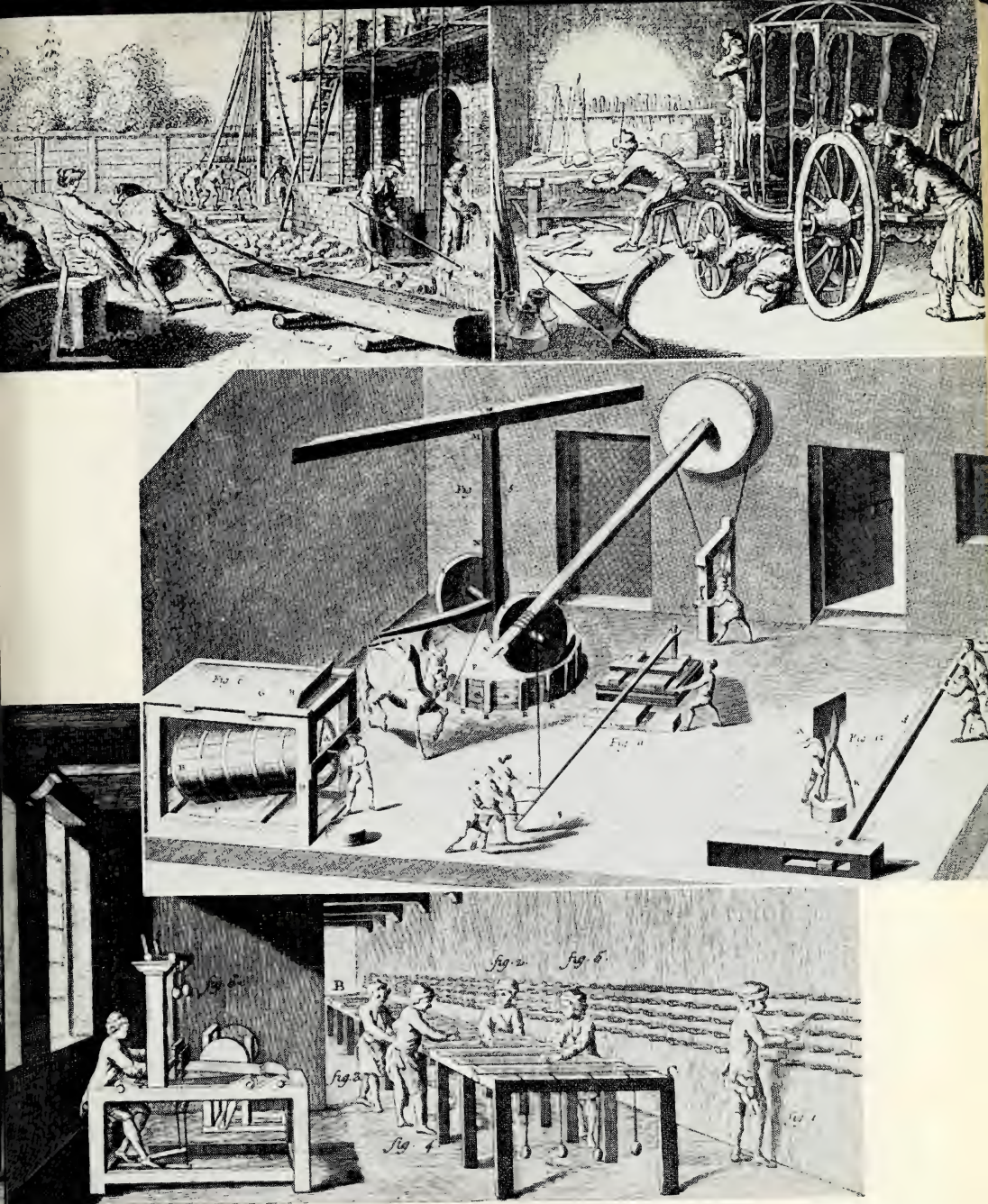
The baroque style of the seventeenth century is characterized by curved forms and restless movement. Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) and Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) were the two greatest exponents of this energetic style. Rubens' *Wolf- and Fox-Hunt* (top) is typically baroque in its spirited movement. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.) Bernini, one of the greatest technicians of the world, decorated the nave of St. Peter's with colored marbles, stucco curtains, ornaments of gold and bronze, and placed a canopy of undulating columns above the High Altar. (Courtesy of the ENIT.)





These are reproductions of two engravings by Abraham Bosse (1642). The upper one shows a shop in the Palais Royal, with books, laces, ribbons, fans, and other luxuries on display to tempt the courtier and his lady. The lower picture shows the interior of the Charity Hospital of Paris at the time when a meal was being distributed to the patients. The legend beneath the original engraving calls attention to the zeal of the fathers in attending the sick, both of body and of spirit, and solicits alms for the support of this good work. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)





Certain types of eighteenth-century industry are illustrated by these pictures. At the upper left are shown various phases of building construction—pile driving, bricklaying, and stonecutting. At the upper right coachmaking is in progress, obviously a “handmade” job. The picture in the middle of the page shows the interior of a copper works. Here “horsepower” is a literal thing and not merely the measure of energy. In the interior view of a cotton-weaving establishment at the bottom of the page, it is interesting to notice that most of the workers are children. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)





At the top left is the portrait of *Herman Doomer, Gilder*, by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), who belonged to no age, but to all time. At the upper right is *Yonker Ramp and His Sweetheart* by Frans Hals (1580–1666), another Dutchman, who excelled in portraying joviality. The lower picture, showing the Lord Mayor's carriage passing through the noisy streets of 18th-century London, is by William Hogarth (1697–1764). (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

ering of the emotional art of harmonic music and the eighteenth-century upsurge of feeling for nature and for the so-called natural rights of the common man. This feeling was expressed in the democratic ideal of Rousseau which stirred all Europe like overpowering music. Indeed, Beethoven dedicated one of his famous works to Napoleon as the champion of the French Revolution, which was supposed to establish natural rights; and then struck the name of Napoleon from the score when the latter betrayed the Revolution.

### The progress of science

The great impulse given to natural science during the Renaissance was carried over into the modern age, and there were no longer forces strong enough to check its growing popularity. Science was becoming a robust youth facing the future with the romantic spirit of the discoverer and explorer, and animated by the strong conviction that it was some day to liberate mankind. Science had not yet broken down the opposition of the humanists in the universities; although some scientific discussion and experimentation were carried on within their walls, the conspicuous contributions were made by individuals and groups outside. These men sat humbly at the feet of Nature to learn her ways. Patiently and persistently, often in obscurity and sometimes in the face of the opposition of churchmen, they observed, experimented, gathered data, and presented their findings before scientific societies. Though there were churchmen and humanists who looked with distrust on the advance of science, it must be added that powerful agencies were lending it support. In the seventeenth century the Royal Society of England was founded in London to promote the new scientific learning, and in France the French government established the Academy of Sciences and endowed its work. Kings themselves, in some cases, became enthusiastic patrons of science. Museums sprang up here and there, scientific publications appeared in increasing numbers, and public interest in scientific discoveries grew steadily.

First and foremost among scientists in the seventeenth century was Sir Isaac Newton, whose *Principia*, published in 1687,



is spoken of by one scholar as representing perhaps "the highest of individual achievement in the realms of pure thought." Born of humble English parents, Newton quickly rose to distinction for his brilliant accomplishments in mathematics. He shares with Leibnitz, a German philosopher, the honor of devising differential calculus, which was to become one of the valuable instruments in the advancement of scientific learning. In the field of astronomy Newton took up and carried to greater heights the contributions of Copernicus and Galileo. He designed a telescope, observed the stars, and wondered by what forces they were held in their courses; the ultimate result of his speculations was his famous law of universal gravitation. Every body, he concluded, exerts a force upon every other body—the sun upon the earth, the earth upon the sun, the stars upon each other, and so forth—and thus the heavenly bodies are held in a state of perpetual equilibrium. It was Newton who formulated the now familiar law that the force of gravity increases directly in proportion to the product of the masses, and inversely in proportion to the squares of the distances. But Newton's discoveries did far more than furnish the modern world with a formula of fundamental importance; they administered the decisive blow to astrology, provided a new conception of the solar system, and disclosed the mechanical nature of the universe, now shown to be reduced to order by the workings of natural law.

The eighteenth century produced no such luminary as Newton, but it added names of distinction to the history of science. In the preceding century Robert Boyle had done important foundation work in the field of chemistry, and this work was now considerably extended. New chemical elements were discovered, and new compounds were produced. A famous Frenchman, Lavoisier, collected the experimental results of his contemporaries, reduced them to a systematic body of knowledge, and thus facilitated the further advance of chemistry. Meanwhile, discoveries in anatomy, physiology, and medicine were adding to man's knowledge of the human body and were arming society to some extent against the ravages of disease. The circulation of the blood had already been discovered dur-

ing the seventeenth century; the relation between microbes and disease was beginning to be understood; vaccination against the dreaded smallpox was introduced; and a German scientist, Haller, was practicing vivisection as a means of advancing physiology. There was progress also in other fields. Benjamin Franklin demonstrated the identity of lightning and electricity; two Italians, Volta and Galvani, invented the voltaic cell and made other additions to physics; Linnaeus, a Swede, contributed to the foundations of botany. In the field of geology observers were studying the stratification of the earth's surface; fossils were collected, examined, and arranged.

This bare and incomplete catalogue of achievements may at least suggest the variety and extent of men's scientific interests in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The increasing devotion to science and the expansion of scientific knowledge were definitely related to the dominating influence of rationalism, particularly during the eighteenth century, sometimes characterized as the Age of Reason. For science proclaimed the supreme importance of man's reason as the one dependable instrument for human enlightenment. Facts visible to the eye, and conclusions dictated by observation and the test of reason, were held to be the only sure guide to the advancement of knowledge. As one writer has expressed it, from the closing decades of the seventeenth century "the tendency had been to pull to pieces the old world of faith and authority and to rebuild it on purely rational lines." These attitudes were fostered both by the philosophy of the period and by science; and in their turn they stimulated a greater interest in scientific study, for the temper and methods of the scientist fitted in admirably with the spirit of the age. Science became a popular subject. Translations of important books were made, popularizations of scholarly studies appeared, and scientific discoveries became a common topic of conversation and speculation.

As we shall see presently, science and philosophy—the two closely related and both contributing to the skeptical spirit of the eighteenth century—produced powerful currents of hostility and opposition to the established institutions and tra-

ditions of the Old Order. The New Learning became the vogue, and contemporary intellectuals came to view their age as a period of a "new enlightenment."

### CIVILIZATION IN TRANSITION: THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

To an ordinary observer surveying the scene in the middle of the eighteenth century, the social structure would have appeared stable and secure. There were no visible signs of an approaching storm. Yet, to the critical and penetrating eye the signs were there, for European society, particularly in France, was outgrowing existing institutions and traditional ways of thought. Society was about to enter another period of profound change. History was revealing itself in characteristic form—a period of authority and stability alternating with a period of liberty and rapid change. We have observed these phenomena all through the development of Western culture. The Middle Ages represent essentially a period of authority and stability; social changes were slow. In the period of the Renaissance society pulled its stakes and set off for a promised land. With the dawn of the modern age, society regained its balance; effective authority was again established by the absolute princes, and society settled down to a slower pace. The Age of Revolution represents another period of liberty and rapid change. How is this historical cycle to be explained?

The explanation lies in facts that have been observed earlier in this work. In the final analysis, a given civilization is an expression of society's conception of what satisfies its needs. When it ceases to satisfy those needs, a few penetrating minds first discover the fact and proclaim it. Then the masses begin to see, and society enters upon an interval of instability. If the outworn elements of the civilization—its institutions, let us say—can be changed by orderly processes and brought into a new adjustment, society may move on without resort to force. If rigid conservatism interposes itself as an immovable barrier to change, then the opposing elements of society are likely to turn to violence. Such, in brief, was the situation in certain



areas of Western civilization on the eve of what we have called the Age of Revolution.

### **Why society was outgrowing the Old Order**

Toward the close of the eighteenth century it was becoming increasingly evident in western Europe that the institutions of the Old Order were not functioning to the satisfaction of large sections of society. That was particularly true in France, where the upheaval began. When we reflect upon the state of the people during the early modern period we can understand the sources of instability. To the upper classes generally all seemed to be right with the world. In France the great nobles, the archbishops, the bishops, and the abbots were, with few exceptions, quite content with the existing order; they could hardly be expected to admit that there was anything fundamentally wrong with it. Hence they stood in almost solid ranks to defend it. But to the unprivileged merchants, bankers, shopkeepers, lawyers, doctors, journalists, and the mass of manual workers, French institutions looked sadly out of joint. Nor did the existing order satisfy the great body of serfs and tenants who lived on the land. All of these groups together, urban and rural, composed the so-called Third Estate and made up more than ninety per cent of the total population. These formed the ranks of the opposition.

Their grievances were just. France had become like a prison for all except the privileged few. Between these privileged ones and the great mass of people there was no equality; the aristocrats held the land and enjoyed its revenues, the serfs tilled the land and were bound to it, the urban groups were shackled in their economic activity by numerous regulations imposed from above. The unprivileged majority bore the brunt of the taxes, yet had no voice in laying them, or in determining how the state income should be spent. There was no equality before the law: the poor man found the courts difficult of access, penalties were brutal and often out of all proportion to the nature of the offense. Conditions like these caused the more enlightened to believe that French institutions needed drastic overhauling.

The French Third Estate had not always been so restless or so critical of the Old Order. Earlier they had generally borne their burdens with much patience and little grumbling. The great majority of them had never experienced any more comfortable existence; they were inclined to think of their hard lot in life, if they ever thought of it at all, as an inevitable part of their existence. But new influences were making themselves felt in French society, and the Third Estate was becoming less manageable.

Reference has been made to the growth in numbers, wealth, and power of the bourgeoisie following the Commercial Revolution of the sixteenth century. The thin upper crust of the bourgeoisie had been able to improve their position in France, sometimes breaking through the barriers into the privileged classes, sometimes winning the favor of the king and opening the way into important offices; but as a class the bourgeoisie had remained "ignoble" and unprivileged. Now, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century, they were in a position to stand erect before the absolute princes and the aristocracy and to demand a voice in the affairs of France. Although the peasantry and the lower social orders in the towns supported the Revolution during its early period, it was the upper bourgeoisie that supplied the leadership and gave it direction, and they directed it largely in their own interests.

### **Influence of the eighteenth-century philosophers**

The growing discontent of the bourgeoisie, and of the Third Estate generally, was stimulated and strengthened by a new enlightenment that came at first from a few intellectuals, commonly called the eighteenth-century philosophers. These not only made an effective minority conscious of their grievances, but attempted to suggest means by which these grievances could be remedied. Students of revolutionary phenomena tell us that revolutions are made before what we are accustomed to call the revolution has begun. This means that before a physical upheaval begins, a revolution in men's minds has preceded it and made it possible. It is the revolution in their ideas, beliefs, and attitudes that leads men to action to redress

their grievances. It was the intellectuals of the eighteenth century and their disciples who created the revolution in men's thinking as a forerunner to the assault that finally transformed the society of the Old Order.

Could we take a comprehensive view of the intellectual revolution, it would be found that the so-called French philosophers were not the only sources of ideas disturbing to traditional attitudes. The contributing influences were like a river with many branches. Some of its branches went back to the radical ideas that found expression during the Puritan revolutionary movement in England (1642-1660); others to the political theories of two seventeenth-century Englishmen, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Their theories are significant because both influenced French revolutionary thought, while Locke is of great importance in the intellectual revolution in the American colonies preceding the War for American Independence. Other currents in the main stream were the religious revival in England in the eighteenth century, represented by the Methodist movement, and accompanying humanitarian movements in England and France. All of these happenings of history and many more besides were symptoms of intellectual ferment or of discontent with existing conditions.

Here, however, we shall have to be content with a brief consideration of some of the outstanding figures closely related to events in France. Among the most influential were the French thinkers Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Diderot. To these names should be added that of the Scotch philosopher and economist Adam Smith. Among French economists there were still others of less fame who helped to shape the course of events. It is not the striking originality of ideas that has given these men an important place in the history of European thought. Much of what they wrote they borrowed from Renaissance and classical writers. What they did, largely, was to elaborate the ideas, and to adapt them admirably to the needs of those who finally planned the assault upon institutions hallowed by time and buttressed by medieval tradition. The French writers, particularly, made these ideas "catching" be-



cause they, instead of sealing their thoughts in forbidding volumes of abstractions, dressed them up in brilliant essays, appealing novels and dramas, and histories, not always accurate, but always stimulating.

The interest of most of these men was not academic; they consciously sought to bring about fundamental changes. Addressing some of his associates in the great enterprise, Voltaire wrote: "Come, brave Diderot, intrepid d'Alembert, ally yourselves; overwhelm the fanatics and the knaves, destroy the insipid declamations, the miserable sophistries, the lying history, . . . the absurdities without number; do not let those who have sense be subjected to those who have none; and the generation which is being born will owe to us its reason and liberty." And again he writes: "Everything that I see appears to be throwing broadcast the seed of Revolution which must some day inevitably come, but which I shall not have the pleasure of seeing. . . . Light extends so far from neighbor to neighbor, that there will be a splendid outburst on the first occasion; and then there will be a rare commotion. The young are fortunate; they will see fine things."

#### **The philosophers' goal for a new society**

To the philosophers, surveying society under the Old Order, the supreme need was liberty, the liberty of the individual to think and act; for the common man appeared to be a prisoner, bound and gagged by a mass of ancient traditions and by numberless regulations imposed by a government in which he had no voice. A passion for liberty had been a characteristic of the Renaissance. In the eighteenth century the passion was revived, but with a broader and more effective application; liberty was to penetrate every aspect of life throughout society. "Liberty," said Voltaire, "embraces all." It became the first of the three magic words that French revolutionists placed everywhere before their eyes.

It was one thing to put the finger on the supreme need of liberty; it was quite another matter to dislodge authority and privilege established by tradition. The accepted standards of right and wrong were heavily weighted in support of society

as history had made it. How could the privileges of the aristocracy and of the Church be branded as wrong or unjust when hallowed custom declared them to be right and just? The philosophers found a fulcrum for their lever in a new standard—the doctrine of natural rights. Man, they declared, was born with certain natural rights conferred by God himself. The natural rights of man were the highest expression of human reason, or, as Rousseau thought, an expression of man's inborn feeling of what is right. What is "natural," then, became the philosophers' measuring stick. Institutions or laws or customs that deprived man of his natural rights could not be justified and should be changed or destroyed, antiquity and history to the contrary notwithstanding. The doctrine became a powerful instrument in the hands of the revolutionists, since it appeared to offer a justification for the demolition of every arbitrary obstacle set in the path of freedom.

Applied to economic life, the doctrine of natural rights led straight to economic individualism, or economic liberty. In his *Wealth of Nations*, published in the year when the American Declaration of Independence was signed, Adam Smith painstakingly exposed the fallacy of the theory of mercantilism<sup>1</sup> as a drag upon the material advance of the individual and of the nation. "To prohibit a great people from making all that they can of every part of their products," he wrote, "or from employing their stock and industry in the way that they judge most advantageous to themselves, is a manifest violation of the most sacred rights of man." According to the eighteenth-century economists the road to individual and national wealth was to be found not under government regulation but in the freedom of the individual to exercise his powers in the pursuit of material fortune. In France the doctrine received the name of *laissez faire*. For the better part of a century *laissez faire* became the rallying cry against the mercantilist system created under the Old Order.

Applied to religion, the idea of individual liberty seemed to justify a new conception of man's relation to the church and of the relation of the church to the state. It was held that it

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 504 ff., 523-525.

was not a proper function of the church or the state to pry into a man's conscience and to impose a particular religious belief, and that the union of church and state, permitting the one to utilize the coercive power of the other to maintain religious uniformity, was therefore reprehensible and should be dissolved. Liberty of conscience, for which many had hoped in vain during the Protestant Reformation, was now given a permanent place in European thought.

The application of the doctrine of natural rights to the conception of society that had been accepted under the Old Order produced a revolution in men's thinking. If men "were born free and equal," the medieval idea of a rigidly stratified society divinely ordained could no longer go unchallenged. Eighteenth-century thought envisaged a society of individuals with equality of rights, not a society of classes possessing privileges in one case and denied them in another. Here was the accepted basis for the French conception of a brotherhood joined to promote the common good of the French nation. So to "liberty" the French added "equality" and "fraternity" to characterize the high and inspiring goal of the Revolution. Thenceforth political nationalism took on a new meaning in Europe, and became a driving force among millions of men in the struggle for political freedom during the nineteenth century.

But however great the desirability of human freedom, a doctrine alone could hardly prevail against the conservative spirit of the Old Order. Asserted rights could become realities only if their champions could achieve political power, for it was hardly likely that princes and aristocrats would surrender those existing institutions which gave them the distinction and high place they held in society. How could absolutism, supported as it was by the accepted theory of divine right, be successfully attacked? Eighteenth-century philosophy produced an answer in a counter theory concerning the origin and character of government. It is known as the social-compact theory. The philosophers asserted that the source of the superior authority of princes was not divine, but human; that, in the final analysis, it was the people, not God, who con-



ferred upon princes the authority to rule, to the end that their superior authority might be used to preserve social union and to protect the ruled in their rights. Thus government was contractual in its nature. If the ruler failed in his functions, he violated the compact and might be removed from power. This idea of the political sovereignty of the people lies at the bottom of our modern conceptions of popular government—government founded on the consent of the governed.

### The influence of science

Science and philosophy went hand in hand in creating the body of ideas, theories, and dogmas that constituted the new "enlightenment," as they called it. Being "scientific" was a sign of one's being enlightened. As already noticed, science became a subject of wide popular interest in the eighteenth century. Its exciting appeal arose in part from what were regarded as its *social* implications. The astonishing achievements of science then looked like the fulfillment of man's hope for a better world. If a Newton could reduce the physical universe to order and reveal the natural laws that governed its motions, could not the philosophers also discover the natural laws underlying society and by the application of these laws resolve social confusion into order and harmony? Out of such speculation was born a new belief in human progress and the *perfectibility* of man.

### The idealism of the early revolutionary period

The historical significance of this body of doctrines and beliefs is that they presented a picture in ideal form of the new society which many hoped would one day be realized, and at the same time offered a justification for the onslaught on the Old Order. It was these ideas that found lodgment in the minds of the leaders in the American Revolution; they gave fervor and direction to the French in the Revolution of 1789; they found their way into Latin America and there stirred the Spanish colonists to wage war on the Old Order of Spain; and they reappeared on the Continent in a succession of revolu-

tionary movements down to the middle of the nineteenth century.

As we look back over the period from our vantage point in the twentieth century, we may find it difficult to understand the optimism and faith of the idealists of the revolutionary period. Modern history offers no parallel, says Lord Acton, the distinguished English historian, to the sublime courage of the French in the completeness with which they broke with the past, and the faith with which they faced the unknown future. In our own time we have grown far less confident of the ability of man to create a Golden Age by the sheer force of his intellect. The doctrine of natural rights and of the social compact, along with some other conceptions of the eighteenth-century philosophers, has long been discarded. But while we may speak of many of their ideas as naïve, it must not be forgotten that some of them are strong in our own traditions. They have been built into our institutions; they are of the very warp and woof of our civilization.

#### **From theories to action**

In the opinion of many, the eighteenth-century intellectuals had pointed the way to a happier existence. But the glittering goal could not be won by the mere repetition of theories and dogmas. It remained for the American colonists first to take action in the construction of a new social order. Hence we have chosen 1775, the beginning of the War for American Independence, as the starting point of the Age of Revolution, for there is a close relation between the upheaval in Europe and the American revolt. Both movements were directed against the institutions of the Old Order and each was preceded by an intellectual revolution which drew its inspiration from the same general sources. On the American side, mention has already been made of the influence of John Locke's ideas. His treatises on government became a kind of bible to many of the American intellectuals of the period. Locke's ideas were essentially like those of the French revolutionary philosophy, in that they emphasized the theories of natural rights and the social contract, and even set forth a

justification for revolution; as a matter of fact the French borrowed considerably from Locke in formulating their own ideas. The significance of Locke in the American movement is attested by the Declaration of Independence, which tersely and pungently expresses the revolutionary philosophy of the eighteenth century. There was still another link between France and America: as an exciting event and as an example of successful revolutionary achievement, the American Revolution undoubtedly acted as a stimulus to revolt in France. The two countries were brought into close relationship both by the French alliance during the war and by French volunteers who came to America and threw in their lot with the American cause.

The War for American Independence ended in 1783; six years later the great French Revolution broke out. The latter marks the beginning of a series of political convulsions from 1789 to 1848, involving Latin America as well as Europe. The turbulence of the period becomes impressive if we pass in review its procession of revolutionary disturbances. In Europe, the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte, a "son of the Revolution," kept society in turmoil for nearly a generation. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the epidemic spread to Latin-American countries. During the twenties it flared up again in Spain and Italy; in 1830 it spread more widely on the Continent. Two years later England was probably saved from a similar fate by the wisdom of her statesmanship, which pointed the way to a constitutional solution of fundamental problems by the Great Reform Bill of 1832 and later reforms. Sixteen years later almost the whole of western Europe again flamed up in the Revolution of 1848.

The designation of the transitional period as the Age of Revolution is not meant to suggest that for nearly a century Europe was in a constant state of revolutionary upheaval. The designation is pertinent rather because the changes were fundamental in character, whether effected by revolutions or by reforms; in such a sense it is a "revolutionary" period. But the word also has significance in the ordinary acceptance of the term. Down to the middle of the nineteenth century,



this was an age when physical force was frankly accepted by the unprivileged classes as an effective means for securing fundamental social and political changes. As we have already seen, a "right" of revolution was imbedded in the philosophy of the period. But back of the physical force there were ever present that eighteenth-century idealism and a faith in man's power to succor an unhappy and oppressed society and to build a Golden Age.

The slender gains from the widespread Revolution of 1848 hastened the spirit of disillusionment and reaction. Revolution was a spent force. Society seemed to have lost much of the optimism and idealism that had characterized the earlier period. Yet Cavour, the "realistic" statesman of Sardinia, included revolution as part of his plans in the unification of Italy in 1859. From 1866 to 1871, the unification of Germany involved "revolutionary" changes of startling character, although Otto von Bismarck himself, another realistic statesman and the architect of German unification, gave no place to revolutions in his political philosophy. France, the scene of the opening of the European revolutionary movement, was also the scene of what might be regarded as the closing act in the long drama, when the French overthrew the Empire of Napoleon III after the defeat of France in the war with Prussia (1870-1871). During the seventies France found political stability with the establishment of the Third French Republic. With that event we have seen fit to find a stopping point in the transitional period.

In the brief space available here it would be futile to attempt to describe European civilization as it existed during this period of transition. Civilization presents a kaleidoscopic appearance: society was in a state of flux; institutions were changed almost overnight. Everywhere in western Europe the struggle went on between the forces of conservatism and reaction on the one side and the revolutionary forces of change on the other, the one striving to salvage traditional institutions, the other fighting to refashion society in keeping with the teachings of the eighteenth-century "enlightenment." When the struggle was over, a culture fundamentally different from that

of the Old Order had emerged. We call the new period the Bourgeois Era; for it was the bourgeoisie who had triumphed in the fight, who now occupied the seats of power, and who stamped the bourgeois pattern on the culture they proceeded to fashion.

### **The Industrial Revolution and the bourgeoisie**

The triumph of the middle class—the bourgeoisie—was hastened by the momentous change which began first in England in the eighteenth century, and then, in the nineteenth, spread to the Continent and to the New World—the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution brought about the collapse of the semimediæval economic organization, described earlier in this chapter as a characteristic part of the Old Order. With the collapse emerged the modern industrial order we know today, built upon the factory system—upon machine power and finance capital. We commonly refer to it as the capitalistic system.

The Industrial Revolution was as decisive in its effects upon modern civilization as the French Revolution. In the next chapter we shall examine some of its important social results. Here we are interested in its political results as they affected the rising fortunes of the middle class. We have already noticed how the Commercial Revolution of the sixteenth century increased the importance and influence of the bourgeoisie before the French Revolution. Now the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century gave the final mighty push to bourgeois power in the nineteenth. In their struggle with aristocratic conservatism, the middle class found its strongest ally in the works of the Industrial Revolution, for it almost literally created a new industrial class, a new capitalist class, whose numbers, wealth, and power made it impossible to keep it long from sharing in the political control so long monopolized by royalty or by a privileged aristocracy. In a word, the Industrial Revolution created an irresistible tide that swept into dominance the princes of industry and finance, together with allied groups who shared in the new wealth created by machinery. Once this class had captured political power they

proceeded to create what has been called a bourgeois civilization. What that civilization is like is the subject of the next chapter. (For summary of the civilization of the Modern Period see Appendix, pp. 1044.)

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## TABLE IV

### SOME HISTORICAL LANDMARKS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION DURING THE BOURGEOIS ERA

#### IN EUROPE

**1865-1885**

Marked progress toward political democracy in western Europe.

**1870's**

(1) Beginning of the Bourgeois Era; (2) growing reaction against laissez faire.

**1870-1890**

(1) Revival of imperialism and the further spread of Western civilization; (2) the Russo-Turkish War (1877), followed by (3) the Congress of Berlin (1878).

**1879-1882**

Establishment of the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria, and Italy).

**1893-1907**

Establishment of the Triple Entente (France, Russia, and Great Britain).

**1905-1914**

(1) Period of intense imperialist rivalry between Powers of the Triple Alliance and of the Triple Entente; (2) international crises in Morocco and in the Balkans; (3) the Serbian crisis of 1914 and the beginning of the World War.

**1914-1919**

(1) The World War; (2) the Russian Revolution (1917)—the overthrow of the Tsarist Regime and the establishment of Russian communism; (3) the German Revolution (1918)—the overthrow of the Empire and the establishment of the German Republic (1919); (4) the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and revolution in Austria (1918).

#### IN THE NEW WORLD

**1865**

(1) Close of the American Civil War; (2) period during and after war marked by the acceleration of economic development in agriculture, industry, commerce, and finance.

**1887-1890**

United States modifies laissez-faire policy and begins government regulation of railroads and of competition.

**1898**

(1) The Spanish-American War; (2) the beginning of American imperialism; (3) United States becomes a World Power.

**1904-1914**

(1) The United States constructs the Panama Canal; (2) United States imperialism in the Caribbean.

**1917**

Entrance of the United States into the World War.

## TABLE IV—*Continued*

### IN EUROPE

#### 1919-1920

(1) The Peace Conference of Versailles (Paris) and the execution of the treaties; (2) the establishment of the League of Nations, the World Court, and the International Labor Organization.

#### 1925

Establishment of the Fascist Order in Italy.

#### 1929-1930

The Great Depression spreads to Europe.

#### 1933

German Nazis obtain political power, overthrow the German Republic, and establish the Nazi Regime.

#### 1935-1939

Italy and Germany extend territorial possessions and extend political power: (1) Italian conquest of Abyssinia (1935-36), and Albania (1939); (2) beginning of Spanish Civil War and the intervention of Italy (1936-39); (3) German annexation of Austria and Sudeten areas in Czechoslovakia (1938) and practically all of Czechoslovakia and Memel (1939); (4) decline of the League of Nations and the return to the balance-of-power principle and the system of alliances.

### IN THE NEW WORLD

#### 1920

The United States repudiates the Treaty of Versailles and refuses membership in the League of Nations, or the World Court, or the International Labor Organization.

#### 1929

Beginning of the Great Depression in the United States.

#### 1933

Introduction of the "New Deal" in the United States; (2) the United States government announces "Good Neighbor" policy in relations with Latin America, repudiating earlier policy of intervention; (3) seeks to establish community of interests in Western hemisphere through Pan-American Conferences; (4) attempts to avoid involvement in European wars through neutrality legislation.



## MODERN CIVILIZATION: THE BOURGEOIS ERA

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**B**Y THE 1870's the forces described in the preceding chapter had advanced far enough to stamp new characteristics on Western civilization, the characteristics we associate with the period of bourgeois dominance. The transition was by no means complete. As we should expect, the influences of the revolutionary period had exerted themselves with varying degrees of force in different areas of Europe; everywhere remnants of the Old Order still persisted; in but few corners of Europe were they strong enough to give the characteristic tone to civilization. The period of storm and stress in its major manifestations appeared to have run its course, and Europe settled down to an interval of comparative peace and stability, which was not to be seriously upset until the catastrophe of 1914. (For chronology of the Bourgeois Era see Table IV, pp. 374-375.)

**Signs of change in the seventies**

What had happened to the political map of the world during the period of revolution? In Europe the most notable changes from pre-revolutionary times were the consolidation of nationalities and an accompanying increase in the family of national states. The French Revolution had given a powerful impulse to political nationalism. The idea of true na-

tional unity was implicit in the French slogan "fraternity," and the idea was exemplified in fact by the French "nation in arms," which had proved well-nigh invincible in the long wars of France with her absolutist neighbors (1792-1815). The driving emotional force of nationalism spread from France over Europe in the nineteenth century. At its best it stood for the freedom of peoples. Where cultural nations were not united in one state it made for unity under one flag; where nationalities found themselves under the despotic rule of alien princes, it made for revolutionary movements of liberation.

By the close of the seventies nationalism had transformed the map of Europe. Central Europe and the Italian peninsula were no longer political checkerboards; in those areas two new states had appeared—the German Empire and the kingdom of Italy. The Belgians had risen against their Dutch masters and established the independent kingdom of Belgium. In the Balkans, nationalism had carved out of the Ottoman Empire the little states of Greece, Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro. Where nationalities still remained under alien authority, as in Austria-Hungary, the Turkish Empire, and elsewhere, nationalism continued as an ever-present source of disturbance and political instability. Thus the new period begins with an enlarged family of national states; and the map of Europe, with a few minor changes, was to remain fixed down to 1914.

In the New World the force of nationalism created similar changes. Separated from European civilization for nearly two centuries and living under a widely different environment, the colonial societies gradually diverged from the outlook and the habits of life of their countrymen in the Old World. Thus they developed a nationalism of their own; and the restrictive and hampering policies of England, Spain, and Portugal made the mother countries look increasingly like alien masters. When the revolutionary ideas of the eighteenth century spread westward, then southward, they found receptive minds and excited the colonists to revolt, first in the North and a little later throughout Latin America. Of the new nations that came into existence, the republic of the United States most com-

pletely exemplified the ideals of the eighteenth-century philosophers.

The signs of change in political institutions were even more striking. Wherever the revolutionary forces had to some degree triumphed, there political institutions received the indelible stamp of the eighteenth-century philosophy, for everywhere in western Europe the aim of the victors was to realize the fruits of victory by translating theories and doctrines into laws and institutions. Almost everywhere in Europe absolutism and divine right disappeared, and some form of popular government became the accepted type. Constitutions were drawn up to guard against the arbitrary exercise of power, and individual rights were to some degree established in law—the right to vote, to hold office, to speak and publish individual opinion, to assemble for discussion of grievances, to petition for their redress, to exercise choice in religious belief. Apparently the rule of law had become a reality—law before which (theoretically, at least) all stood equal. That these rights were often abridged and violated may be taken for granted; nevertheless, the rights of the individual as dreamed of by the philosophers had greatly increased beyond those he possessed under the Old Order. New institutions gave to society a political stability which it had not enjoyed since the French Revolution, and the constitutions then in force continued, with minor alterations, down to the World War.

By the seventies, the economic world of the Old Order had been transformed beyond recognition. Between the force of a theory—*laissez faire*—and the greater force of the Industrial Revolution, the old economic order had been overthrown in most parts of Europe. Serfdom had practically everywhere disappeared—even in backward Russia—and with it had largely disappeared the medieval methods of agriculture. In industry the machine was fast displacing the handicraft system, factories were springing up, the ancient guilds were gone, modern trade unions were on the march. With the expansion of industry went the growth of trade, until there was hardly a corner of the globe that did not feel its influence. How much of this economic advance can be attributed to the adop-



tion of the laissez-faire policy it is impossible to say; at any rate the advance was accompanied by the retreat of government from the economic life of the people. As a system mercantilism was dead, for the time being. Freedom of enterprise and freedom of trade had become a reality practically complete in Great Britain; the Continent did not make so clean a sweep, but it went far in imitating the British example. With these sweeping changes the modern capitalistic system was born.

Hardly less striking were the changes in society. The social pyramid of the Old Order, with its noble and privileged minority at the apex and its unprivileged masses at the base, was seriously cracked if not demolished. Though the nobility had not actually disappeared from society, its members had been stripped of their prerogatives—if we ignore the power and privilege that continued to lodge in their social prestige. There were exceptions: in Russia, for example, where the nobleman maintained his dominance in society; and even in England, where the peer still enjoyed political privilege in the House of Lords. But speaking generally, industrial progress was shifting the emphasis from agriculture to industry, and political power from an aristocracy of land to an "aristocracy of stocks and bonds," the so-called capitalist class. In the lower orders of society a corresponding shift in the balance was taking place, from the toilers on the land to the toilers in factory, mine, and shop. Thus into the new society had come two dominant influences: that of the triumphant bourgeois businessman, and that of the mass of landless workers, the proletariat. Each was to impress its character on the culture of the new era.

#### SOURCES OF TENSION AND ANTAGONISM IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY SOCIETY

The Industrial Revolution was fundamentally responsible for this division of society into contrasting and more or less antagonistic classes. Its general effect was to split society into two groups, though the lines of division tend to disappear in

certain social areas. We have already noticed that the power which carried the upper bourgeoisie on to political supremacy was largely a power based on wealth derived from the new machine industry. The same power gave them a position of decisive influence in all phases of activity. They gave to the civilization of the time its most characteristic qualities. At the same time, the Industrial Revolution created another world in nineteenth-century society—a distinctively new world of labor. The expansion of industry and commerce following the Revolution made urban life dominant. Urban life is built upon industry and trade. It was around the new mills and factories that villages and small towns developed into great urban centers. The industrial workers and the transportation workers necessarily formed a large proportion of the population. In other words, with the introduction of machine power there emerged in nineteenth-century society a vast army of industrial workers the like of which had not existed in all previous history. This division of society is a fact for pointed emphasis, for it reveals the roots of some of the most important social phenomena of our day, some of the most baffling problems of our day. Let us first examine the position of each social group.

### **The dominant position of the bourgeoisie**

During the period since 1870 the bourgeoisie have placed their stamp so indelibly upon modern civilization in many of its characteristic aspects that the new age has been called the Bourgeois Era. Used as a term to designate the age, the word "bourgeoisie" refers to the business class, led more or less by the men of great urban wealth, who fought their way into the seats of power in the course of the struggle with princes and aristocracy. Popular writers have called the civilization of the period a "businessman's civilization," because the businessmen in all phases of economic activity, and their allies in the professions, seem to dominate what is typical in the life of the period. Where the bourgeoisie had captured the government, they naturally proceeded to use it as an instrument for the promotion of bourgeois interests, just as the

princes and the aristocracy had used government in their day to safeguard theirs, and just as the Russian Soviet is seeking to promote the workers' interests under a "dictatorship of the proletariat."

The individual liberties preached by the eighteenth-century philosophers the bourgeoisie appropriated to themselves in full measure wherever they held the reins of government; less freely they bestowed them upon the masses at the base of the social pyramid. Political, economic, and religious liberty were principles generally accepted by the bourgeoisie; but what is important, in the field of visible accomplishments, is that the newly won liberty cleared the way for the conquest of the material world by a utilitarian, industrial society. The new princes of industry and finance produced fabulous wealth. They coveted profits for themselves, and they set the gauge for a profit-seeking society. Some of them amassed great fortunes; they built palatial houses in town and country, rivaling those of the old aristocracy; they patronized science, art, and education. The old aristocracy itself succumbed to the spell of the hour, seeking to rehabilitate shrinking revenues from the land by speculations and investments in stocks and bonds. Nevertheless, they did represent a tradition that offered some resistance to the scale of values which the materialistic age had set up for acceptance by society.

### **The position of the industrial workers**

The masses shared in the immense increase of wealth produced by their hands under the directing minds of their capitalist commanders. The general level of material well-being was rising; standards of living were advancing. Yet there was growing discontent among the laboring classes, particularly the great armies of industrial workers in the towns and cities. Material gains were often offset and sometimes completely destroyed by recurring periods of business depression that threw thousands of workers out of employment and depressed the wages of those who continued in their jobs. The skill of the workers' hands and their willingness to work were all the capital they possessed to maintain themselves and their



families. When the opportunity to work was denied, they were helpless. This insecurity of their lives fed their uneasiness and discontent. Moreover, even when times were good, working hours were long; conditions in factories and mines were often wretched; and wages, they felt, were all too low, measured in terms of the wealth they produced for their employers. If they were maimed or incapacitated by industrial accidents, the laws made compensation difficult to obtain and inadequate when it was obtained; in time of sickness income ceased, and there was little or no emergency fund to fall back upon; when years of unremitting labor had earned a rest in old age, there was little or nothing to retire to; and when death claimed the worker, there was all too often misery awaiting his dependents.

The capacity of society to produce wealth had been several times multiplied by science and the machine. No one could deny that; yet large sections of society felt no economic security. Critics who looked beneath the glamour of a spotted prosperity began to point to the lights and shadows in the distribution of the new wealth, to the poverty and misery of the slum areas in the industrial centers, contrasted with the lavish display of riches among the few. Evidently, individual freedom was not bringing the Golden Age. The time was ripe for a new revolt; this time, not against absolute princes and an ancient nobility, but against certain phases of the very philosophy which, less than a hundred years earlier, had been proclaimed as the salvation of mankind, and against the class which appeared to be the chief beneficiary of that philosophy—the bourgeoisie.

The growing militancy of labor was fostered by conditions in the new industrial towns. There tens of thousands of workers were brought together, elbow to elbow, in factory and slum districts where the hard conditions of life bred a spirit of discontent that soon became vocal. At the same time the close association of large aggregations of workers, moved by common grievances, excited a working-class consciousness and solidarity. Never before in history had circumstances in the labor world been so favorable for organization and mass

action in defense of the workers' interests. One of its first devices was the organization of trade-unions.

### The trade-union movement

The trade-union movement is considered in some detail elsewhere in this volume.<sup>1</sup> The chief purpose here is to describe briefly the situation from which the movement sprang. It should be remembered that the new industry operated under the laissez-faire policy of government. Employers were early given practically complete freedom in fixing wages, hours, and conditions of labor. It was argued when labor-saving machinery was first introduced that it would be a boon to the workers; it would remove much of the drudgery from their shoulders, would shorten hours of labor, and provide more leisure. It did not work out so in the first half of the nineteenth century. Machinery could produce wealth at an unprecedented speed, and the machines never grew tired. Intent on getting a maximum of return on their investment in machinery, the new industrial masters planned to give the machines as little rest as possible. But the machines were not wholly automatic; they had to be tended by factory hands—men, women, and children. Long hours resulted—from twelve to sixteen hours a day. Labor cost is a production cost. The lower the cost of production the more successful was competition likely to be with other producers, and the higher the profits. Conditions favored the employer because the labor market was usually overstocked with workers competing for jobs, and those who sold their labor cheapest were most likely to find employment. In this situation wages were beaten down to cruelly low levels. Added to these evils were the bad conditions in mills, factories, and mines where no law compelled the employer to provide sanitary conditions or the ordinary comforts of human beings. Moreover, there was an iron discipline introduced into the early factories providing fines and punishments for infractions of rules imposed by the employer.

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 584 ff.

Against this background we must view the rise of trade-unions in the early nineteenth century. The basic idea behind them was that so long as individual workers bargained with the employer for a job there was no hope of their improving their lot in life; so they aimed to combine their fellows of the same craft into unions, to bargain collectively with their employer through their own union representatives. Where such negotiations failed to obtain a favorable contract, the union could fall back on mass pressure through the strike. The right to combine, to bargain collectively, and to strike became legal only after a long struggle against the opposition of the employing groups. In Great Britain these rights were not established in law until the seventies.

The trade-union movement is an important characteristic manifestation of the modern economic order. In every country where machine industry grew up, trade-unions became a feature of economic life, as if they had sprung spontaneously out of the environment created by the Industrial Revolution.

#### **Humanitarianism and socialism**

This same environment offered a field for another characteristic movement of the nineteenth century—the humanitarian movement, most conspicuous in England but present in all Western industrial countries. Humanitarianism, unlike trade-union activity, was largely the work of men outside the labor world. It was the work of philanthropists and, in England, conspicuously the work of churchmen who thought that Christianity should concern itself with conditions that bred poverty, brutality, and immorality. The humanitarian movement centered its fire largely upon the social results of the *laissez-faire* policy. Long before 1870, certain English humanitarians were protesting in Parliament against the conditions in factories, mills, and mines. Employers, they asserted, were capitalizing their newly acquired freedom by exploiting men, women, and children. Slowly the sentiment gained ground in political circles that nonintervention by the state in the economic affairs of a nation was no longer in all



situations a tenable policy. It was pointed out that the time had come to shift the emphasis from individual rights to the paramount welfare of society, to curtail individual liberty where its exercise threatened the good of the many. In England the doctrine came to be called *collectivism*.

Not only in England, but in the industrial countries of the Western world generally, the collectivist idea began to permeate political thought and government policy. The reason is not far to seek. Where the bourgeois parties did not catch the humanitarian spirit of the time, they at least understood the political expediency of making concessions for workingmen's votes; and, above all, they came to understand the importance of guarding against the dangerous threat of socialism to bourgeois supremacy. The result was a rising tide of social legislation during the latter part of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, designed largely to improve the lot of the industrial workers. These responses of the ruling middle class to the attacks upon *laissez faire* did not destroy individualism; they merely sought to mitigate its evils.

The workers accepted the early reforms of the humanitarians more or less gratefully but not as a satisfactory solution of their problems, which were hardly touched during most of the nineteenth century. The rank and file of labor became increasingly devoted to the direct pressure of trade-unions as the most effective instrument to improve the lot of the workers. But more daring and radical leaders pressed the attack upon individualism much further. These were the apostles of a new social philosophy—the socialists. They accepted social legislation as better than nothing; but to them it was merely a salve applied to the superficial symptoms of deep-seated social disease. The capitalistic system, based on individualism, was fundamentally bad and would have to be destroyed before a cure could be effected. Like the collectivists, the socialists stressed the superior claims of society against the claims of the individual; unlike the collectivists, they maintained that government regulation was feeble and inadequate, since it preserved the competitive system domi-

nated by the individual profit-seeking motive, and did nothing to loosen the strangle hold the capitalist maintained on society by reason of his control of the instruments of production. Only by the destruction of these features of the existing order could a sick society be healed. Consequently, the socialists urged that society take over the instruments of production in the major economic activities of the people, to be controlled and administered not in the interests of an individual or of a class, but in the interest of the whole community.

This new philosophy of revolt had its beginning in the humanitarianism of the early revolutionary period. One of its earliest exponents was a French nobleman, the Comte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), who spent his fortune to propagate his ideas. In the history of socialism, Saint-Simon and his followers are known as the Utopians. They exerted slight influence upon the working classes of their day. It was Karl Marx (1818-1883) who made socialism a militant, revolutionary force in contemporary civilization. After years of labor under the greatest privation, Marx produced a book on economics, *Das Kapital*—in its influence on the modern world probably the most significant book of the nineteenth century. *Das Kapital*, together with a little work called the *Communist Manifesto* written by Marx and Friedrich Engels, became the bible of the socialist movement.

With the work of Marx, the issues became squarely joined between capitalism and labor. The issues involved a conflict of interests between the ruling middle-class group on the one side, and a militant proletariat on the other. Underneath the conflict of interests lay a conflict of philosophies as to how human well-being might be best achieved—a conflict between individualism and socialism. The one envisaged a society of individuals possessing well-defined rights, and competing one with another in the race for individual satisfaction and achievement; the other contemplated a society in which the individual was supposed to enjoy a richer participation in the social inheritance by his more complete subordination to community interests and coöperation with his fellows. The individu-

alistic capitalist class sought to retain, through its control of the instruments of production, a supremacy based on the economic power of the group; the socialist sought to destroy this supremacy by taking the major instruments of production from the capitalists and placing them in the hands of society. The competitive spirit of capitalism was extended into the arena of international relations; that is to say, capitalism was militantly nationalistic. In contrast, the co-operative spirit of socialism projected into the world community made the socialist movement international. The irreconcilable nature of capitalism and socialism has made inevitable an unceasing conflict for supremacy. That conflict is a major and portentous fact in the world today.

### **The postwar aftermath**

It will not have escaped the reader that in the preceding brief account of the tensions and antagonisms within nineteenth-century society we can perceive the background of some of the most serious problems of our own time. Before the World War, governments and private agencies were able to ease such tensions and compose class conflicts of interest by timely compromises and reforms. They blunted the weapons of socialism by far-reaching social legislation of especial benefit to the working classes. By such means the grievances of the workers against the capitalistic system were at least minimized, although they were not altogether removed, and the ruling middle class was able to preserve the institutions of the bourgeois order with minor alterations. On the eve of the great world conflict of 1914 the bourgeois regime thus showed, outwardly, evidence of stability and great powers of resistance to opposition forces.

But with the World War came a vast destruction of the wealth piled up by the industrial system. The complex machinery, political and economic, national and international, was so far thrown out of adjustment to the needs of society that it could no longer function satisfactorily. Under these unfavorable conditions social tension greatly increased, in some countries to the breaking point. Even in countries able



to withstand the strain, governments have had great difficulty in meeting deeply rooted social antagonisms. Many governments have broken under the impact of discontented masses, democratic institutions have been swept away, and the capitalistic order has been considerably altered. Modern civilization has entered another period of instability and revolutionary change. Old landmarks established since the French Revolution are disappearing, and principles and ideals that were regarded by the great majority as definitely fixed have not only been placed on trial but have been completely abandoned in a large section of the civilized world.

For those who live where free institutions still survive it may be well to examine dispassionately, in the light of historical perspective, the problems that threaten the existence of these institutions. Their roots do not lie in shallow soil.

## SCIENCE AND THE ARTS DURING THE BOURGEOIS ERA

### The advance of science and technology

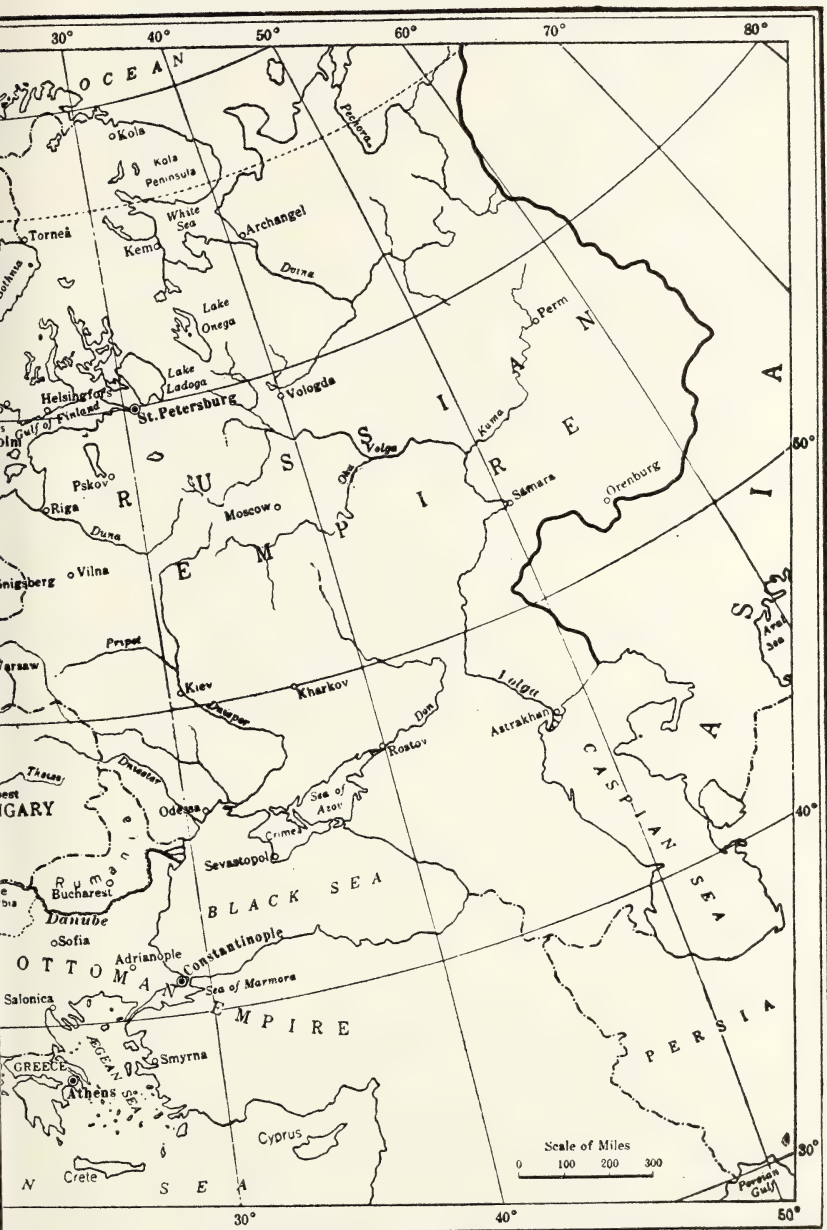
When modern science emerged as an exciting study during the Renaissance, attention was directed to the complete accord of science with a society that was to devote itself increasingly to materialism. The close relation between science and materialism becomes crystal clear as we enter the period of the Industrial Revolution, for the Revolution represents in large measure the prodigious results of the application of modern science to the conquest of the material world. The spectacular march of the machine is bound up with the advance of science. If the inconceivable had happened, if there had been no extension of scientific knowledge after the eighteenth century, twentieth-century culture would be quite different from what it is. The obvious fact is that science has fed on its successive discoveries and has grown prodigiously. Each new discovery has illuminated the way for further discoveries, until enthusiasts have begun to wonder whether there is any peak that science may not some day attain.

Despite the popular acclaim of science in the eighteenth











century, it was a suitor knocking for recognition at the doors of the universities, a suitor held in suspicion and distrust by many churchmen and classical academicians. By the middle of the nineteenth century it had achieved a recognized place in institutions of higher learning; by the beginning of the twentieth it had become a kind of god to be worshipped. Men no longer commonly appeal to the Scriptures for guidance, as in the seventeenth century, or to the sayings of the classical thinkers, as in the eighteenth; they commonly quote science and statistics. Not only has science gained a pre-eminent place in the schools, but money has been poured out lavishly for its advancement. Scientific foundations backed by rich endowments have been established, laboratories have sprung up in connection with great industrial plants and distributing agencies, governments subsidize their work, scientific books and periodicals pour from the press. All these are some of the more obvious indications of the dominating place of science in contemporary society.

The most impressive and the most characteristic achievement of bourgeois civilization is material progress. We speak of the Industrial Revolution in England as an event of the eighteenth century; more accurately, we may think of the eighteenth century as marking the beginning of a change that has continued with increasing momentum to the present. As in the case of science, one mechanical invention has paved the way for further technical improvement, or for what we call new inventions, which are usually the result of modifications, or improvements, or new applications of old inventions. In this advance of the machine, science has been the hand-maiden of invention, for in our day science remains "pure" only so long as the ingenuity of man fails to discover how to put it to work. In the eighteenth century much of the popular interest in science lay in the supporting evidence it appeared to furnish to the speculations of the social philosophers in their designs for a happier social order. Popular interest in science today is basically an interest in technology, in the marvelous power of machines to conquer the physical world and to create material wealth. If the common man wor-



ships science today, he worships it in the image of the machines that it has produced.

Applied science has transformed the physical world. It has made possible the support of a phenomenal increase of population since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The dense populations of today could not have existed in Europe under the medieval handicraft and manorial systems; and we are told that populations are still far below the maximums that science and machinery can support. Science is steadily lengthening human life and, as applied in sanitary engineering, is making the world a cleaner one to live in. Particularly in the field of chemistry, science is revealing improved methods of production, creating new products, and competing with nature in the making of things for which man until recently depended upon nature's workshop. Technical invention has largely kept pace with scientific discovery, devising machines to supplant human labor in ways hardly dreamed of a few generations ago, and multiplying wealth at a dizzy rate. New sources of power have been discovered and utilized. The electric motor and the gas engine have displaced or supplemented steam power and have made possible swift locomotion in the air and new automotive contrivances on land and water. With telephones, cables, and wireless, communication has become almost instantaneous over wide distances. These changes in locomotion and communication have made neighbors of people in widely separated areas and have caused our planet to shrink as by a miracle.

The results of science have not proved to be unmixed blessings. Scientists frequently remind us that the knowledge which they have put at the disposal of society is not harmful in itself; it is the uses to which science is put by individuals and society that sometimes bring injurious results. Populations, massing about the machine, have become increasingly urban. The urbanizing of society has produced conspicuous changes in social life and created many perplexing problems. The great wealth produced by the machine has been largely concentrated in the hands of a minority; and, as we have seen, this unequal distribution, together with its social conse-

quences, has emphasized divisions in society and has awakened deep-seated, disruptive forces. Nor must we forget that science has been permitted to release forces productive of great social misery and destruction. In its potentialities for harm to humanity, scientific, mechanized war is as far advanced over the technique of the past as the airplane is over the horse-drawn carriage of a generation ago. But it is only fair to remind ourselves that it is the accepted institution of war that has created these engines of destruction and that science has had nothing to do with the creation of the institution of war.

Problems have multiplied so fast during the machine age that some observers have concluded that society has become the helpless victim of the machines that it has created to serve it. If so, the fault lies partially in the fact that we have been measuring the value of science too much in terms of individual profits and material progress and too little in terms of social welfare. But another factor, perhaps more important, has been the speed with which social changes have taken place during the machine age. Society was subject to greater changes during the nineteenth century than during the whole of the Christian era preceding. And yet if we could transport a child of ten now living in the United States to the American world of half a century ago, he would rub his eyes in amazement, so unfamiliar would it appear to him. Thus change as a law of social life has become an impressive fact. New problems of social adjustment, often baffling in their complexity, have presented themselves in such quick succession that man's experience has failed to keep pace; and when old formulas have proved futile, the intelligence of those in command has frequently lacked the flexibility, imagination, and boldness to cope with the situation.

#### **Influence of materialism on nineteenth-century thought**

The growth of materialism, exemplified in the progress of science and stimulated by science, made a deep impression on nineteenth-century thought. It likewise affected literature and the other arts, as we shall see later in this account. In

the realm of religious thought the direct influence of science is perhaps most clearly visible. The belief in Christianity as a divine revelation of truth and the influence of Christianity on behavior grew increasingly weaker during the Bourgeois Era. This phenomenon is not peculiar to this period, as we know; we observed the weakening of religious ties during the Renaissance, when materialism and science were rising together. The trend reached a high point in the eighteenth century, particularly in France. It was then that rationalism, definitely related to science, emphasized the idea that religious beliefs like all other beliefs should be subjected to the tests of reason. This attitude meant that to many revelation was no longer acceptable as a basis for what man should believe about religion. A reaction favorable to religion occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century, but it was not lasting; the tide of growing disbelief steadily rose during the second half of the century. It is that movement that we wish to examine in relation to the progress of science.

First let us consider the influence of astronomy. It will be recalled that medieval society accepted the geocentric theory of the universe. Not only was the earth accorded the central position, but it was believed to be divinely created as the special dwelling place of man. In the near heavens above the earth was the throne of God, and the earth was his footstool. The whole conception tended to nurture in man a complacent acceptance of his own importance in the divine scheme of things. The work of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton made it necessary for man to orient his thinking to an entirely new conception of the position of man, his earth, and his heaven; and the necessity has been greatly emphasized in the recent past by successive discoveries of giant heavenly bodies of whose existence Galileo did not dream. One example will suffice as illustration. A few years ago a new star, Antares, was discovered whose diameter measures 400,000,000 miles. This giant among giants lies some 22,500,000 times as far from the earth as our own sun. The advance of astronomy has made men pause to wonder at the limitless expanse of the universe, and to contemplate the



shrinking importance of our relatively insignificant solar system and our dwarf planet, the earth.

The progress of geology has affected men's religious beliefs. During the early decades of the nineteenth century Sir Charles Lyell, an English geologist, spent years gathering data based on a study of the stratification of the earth's crust: the rising and falling of land surfaces; their disintegration by moving water, frost, and other agencies; the action of earthquakes and volcanoes. From these data he concluded that the history of the earth could be explained by the action of these forces operating over unnumbered ages of time. The results of his researches not only contradicted the Biblical version of the origin and history of the earth, but pushed back the origin of man thousands of years beyond the date, 4004 B. C., set for Biblical chronology. Since Lyell's time a considerable part of the earth's surface has been explored and geological data have been greatly increased, all tending to confirm Lyell's general conclusions concerning the great antiquity of the earth and of man.

In the field of biology still more revolutionary pronouncements were at hand. The publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 and his *Descent of Man* in 1871 constitutes a landmark in the history of science comparable, some think, to the contribution of Sir Isaac Newton. In these laboriously constructed works Darwin set forth the scientific data on which he based the theory that man, like the other animals, is a product of organic evolution. The evolutionary doctrine as applied to man inevitably tended to undermine the Scriptural account of his creation. But more destructive than Darwin's works themselves were the militant efforts of such men as Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley. They and less notable champions originated the public controversy that became a long-drawn-out and bitter argument between the supporters of science and the orthodox defenders of theology.

Herbert Spencer, belonging to a line of middle-class non-conformists, had, before the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, thought out a complete system of philosophy in which he applied the evolutionary principle to the whole world

of organic and inorganic matter. In his *First Principles* of this extended work on *Synthetic Philosophy*, he attempted a "reconciliation" of science and religion, but ended by concluding that the "power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable," and that the weakness of religion therefore lay in the claim that it had a knowledge about a power called God, which must remain unknowable. Spencer's application of the evolutionary idea to the whole universe not only made his work the accepted "gospel of progress," but laid the basis for the acceptance of the mechanistic theory that the phenomena of nature are the products solely of mechanical forces which lie wholly outside man's control.

Thomas Huxley, a distinguished English biologist, was the outstanding popularizer of Darwinism. With a zest for intellectual battle he threw himself into the fray, writing numerous articles for periodicals, and more extended books, and taking the platform in public debate against churchmen and all other foes of the new doctrine. He carried his side of the controversy from a mere defense to a determined attack upon the foundations of revealed religion, and rejected Christianity as being no longer worthy of emulation and support, even in its system of moral values.

To the influence of astronomy, geology, and biology in the breaking down of earlier religious attitudes should be added, if space would permit, the influences that flowed from a "scientific" criticism of the Scriptures by distinguished scholars, themselves of deep religious faith, whose researches tended to undermine rather than to strengthen religious foundations. Most notable among these were the German historians Niebuhr (1776-1831) and Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886). Similar was the result of the work of Ernest Renan (1823-1892), a French orientalist of distinction, whose *Life of Jesus*, in the opinion of many, stripped the great founder of Christianity of both mystery and divinity in the traditional sense and gradually produced a reinterpretation of religious values.

These currents of thought help to explain why we find the old attitudes toward revealed religion progressively breaking

down as we approach the twentieth century. Man has become skeptical of supernatural forces as factors determining his fate; more and more he has turned to science for an explanation of what appears mysterious. It is hardly necessary to add that this change is by no means universal; religious attitudes essentially medieval still dominate millions in contemporary society. The trend is shown rather in the widespread growth of agnosticism and indifference to the church, and in the sharpening of divisions in religious ranks themselves along the general lines of liberalism and fundamentalism. Altogether, trends in the twentieth century appear to many to point to the passing of the old age of faith. Yet, it should be clear, science has not proved religion itself to be a myth, though it has stripped it of many beliefs traditionally associated with religion. In the light of history, and of science itself, science does not represent a consummation of knowledge, nor is science infallible; no one can foresee what the next age may bring forth.

#### **Literature in the nineteenth century**

The period of Romantic literature overlaps the early decades of the nineteenth century. To appreciate the marked change introduced by the Romantic Movement we should recall the literary period that preceded it, the age of classicism dominated by literary dictatorship, usually French, which imposed on literature an extreme formalism leading to artificiality and cramping restraints. The literary canons then in force were another expression of rationalism, with their insistence that literature should limit itself to an intellectual appeal to human reason, and not to feeling and sentiment.

Romanticism was a revolt against that conception of literature. The Romantic spirit of rebellion is in keeping with the spirit of revolt in the revolutionary age; it is a part of the revolt. One important force in the Romantic Movement was the influence of Rousseau, who made decisive contributions to the movement against rationalism. Rationalism, he held, overemphasized the "intellectual" in man—the reflective, rational side of his being. Underneath man's intellectual



nature lay the deeper, fundamental instincts and natural feelings of man which furnish the motive power in true living. Through his ideas runs the plea for a recognition of man's right to individual self-expression, the unrestrained expression of his instincts and natural feelings—in a word, his right to be "natural." His "natural man" philosophy is expounded in *Émile*, a treatise on education, and *The New Heloise*, a novel of great popularity in the early nineteenth century.

It is not to be concluded that Romanticism sprang solely from Rousseau. Many currents contributed to the change. In this brief mention he has been singled out only because his influence was paramount. In the age contemporary with and following Rousseau, literature, feeling the impulse of a new freedom, entered upon a period of remarkable activity. It is a many-sided literature, sometimes expressing quite contrary moods. The release from the earlier restrictions opened the way to the free expression of man's emotions and of his imagination—both abhorrent to the classicists of the seventeenth century. Under the new individualist spirit, the tendency toward uniformity characteristic of the classicist writers disappeared; writers now became extremely individualistic, and literature started off in various directions. Some writers turned to melancholy contemplation, some to tales of horror and mystery; others to stories of heroic deeds, or to tales of romance or exciting adventure. The beauty of nature made little appeal to most writers of the seventeenth century, and it found no place in literature.<sup>1</sup> The romanticists made it a common theme in both poetry and prose, and the same was true in painting. In the late eighteenth century other writers turned to Rousseau's idea of the "natural man" and became sentimental about his "innate goodness," corrupted, it was asserted, by the artificial restraints laid upon him by the institutions of civilization. During the early period of the French Revolution, when it seemed to promise a new age of human happiness, poets exalted the new freedom. When disillusionment came in the nineteenth century, literature sought

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<sup>1</sup>In England the work of Milton stands as a conspicuous exception to this generalization.

a retreat from the realities of the world. The rise of an ugly materialistic civilization after the Industrial Revolution had a similar effect upon the sensitive minds of writers. These reactions found literary expression in the portrayal, by some writers, of quiet delights of the country with its beauty of landscape and its tranquillity, and in the glorification, by others, of the life of the Middle Ages. This enumeration by no means exhausts the types of Romantic literature, but it will serve to give some idea of the numerous avenues of expression opened by the new literary freedom.

Qualities of Romantic literature had begun to appear sporadically as far back as the middle of the eighteenth century, then became more common as the nineteenth century approached. In England they appeared strikingly in the poet Thomas Gray—in his *Elegy*. The growing feeling for nature was expressed in the poetry of James Thomson, William Cowper, Oliver Goldsmith, and Robert Burns. At the end of the eighteenth century English Romanticism excited a brilliant response in Germany, where the Romantic spirit shone brightly in some of the dramas of Lessing and Schiller, in the folk literature of Herder, and in some of the works of Goethe, whose activity extends into the nineteenth century. These represent the first great flowering of German literature in the modern period. But the high tide of the Romantic movement came in the early nineteenth century, with the “children of the Revolution,” in whose minds were fermenting ideas of the Revolution—in England, with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Southey, Byron, and Shelley. With their passing we enter upon the period of Victorian literature: the poetry of Tennyson and Browning; the novels of Thackeray, Dickens, and Eliot; the essays and historical writings of Carlyle and Ruskin. In France we have the critical essays and novels of the celebrated Madame de Staël; the poetry of Lamartine; the novels of the ever-popular Alexandre Dumas; the plays and novels of Victor Hugo, perhaps the most outstanding of French romanticists; and the novels of Balzac and George Sand, severe critics of bourgeois life. In Italy, the outstanding writers were the poet Leopardi and the poet and

novelist Manzoni. Russia produced one notable poet, Pushkin, and three novelists of high order—Gogol, Dostoevski, and Turgenev. During this period America may be said to have found a minor place in literature with the works of such writers as Irving, Cooper, Hawthorne, Emerson, Poe, and Whitman.

The close of the Romantic Movement corresponds roughly to the declining optimism and idealism of the political revolutionary movement and the rising power of bourgeois leadership. The literary figures now coming on the scene responded more definitely to the thought and feeling of a changed environment. The advance of machine industry, the growing influence of commercialism, the spread of mechanistic or deterministic doctrines induced by scientific discoveries—all combined to drive men's minds counter to the spirit of Romanticism. This does not mean that the qualities of Romanticism completely disappear from literature, but that those qualities no longer represent what is dominant in literature. What is dominant, as the nineteenth century wears on, is the prevailing tone of the bourgeois age. The word *realism* is commonly used to describe the new spirit that comes over literature. The word implies a fidelity to facts, to real life, or to nature, in the treatment of the subjects of literature, without any attempt at idealization.

Writers affected by the impact of a commercial, comfortable society, became motivated by a materialistic point of view. Resorting largely to prose fiction, they regarded themselves as realistic novelists. In conscious or unconscious emulation of the scientist, they cultivated an objective attitude and mechanical accuracy in describing the life about them. They became reporters of facts rather than imaginative creators, giving, as some of them thought, the character and value of science to their portrayals. In subject matter they were disposed to emphasize the uglier aspects of life and those traits of human nature which link man most closely with the lower animals. Other writers, responding to the humanitarian impulse of the period, wrote novels and plays designed to promote various causes, such as socialism, movements for



improving the living and working conditions of the industrial classes, the single standard of morality, and the like. In the words of one critic it may be said that "this dominant and characteristic literature of the last sixty or seventy years, including certain very recent developments out of realism, represents the combined influences of science and commerce in materializing, externalizing, and standardizing the lives of modern men and women, while leaving their inner selves a chaos of undirected, conflicting, and vague emotions."

Of the writers who belong to the crowded literary world of the last half century, preceding the World War, only the more important figures will be listed here. Not all of them can be classified as "realists," and in some of the writings of those who can be so classified there appear examples more in keeping with the Romantic than with the realistic spirit. Literature continued to be highly individualistic, and no single literary label can be attached to all of the writings of the period. The idiosyncrasies of the authors themselves and their individual experiences led them to react variously in their writings to the confusing currents of the age. One tendency is noticeable as we pass on to the twentieth century: that is an increasingly critical and caustic temper in much of the literature in its analysis of bourgeois civilization.

On the Continent, France is distinguished by her prose writers: Flaubert, the greatest novelist of the period; Alphonse Daudet, also a novelist; De Maupassant, famous for his short stories; and Émile Zola, journalist and prolific writer of novels. Overlapping the twentieth century, Anatole France, brilliant critic, satirist, and novelist, was the outstanding figure. One other French author must be mentioned, whose influence has spread widely since the World War—Marcel Proust, a writer of novels critically analytical of contemporary society. In Germany the leading authors were Sudermann, dramatist and novelist, and Gerhart Hauptmann, poet and dramatist. First among German authors still living is Thomas Mann, regarded by some as the ranking novelist of the contemporary period. In Italy the foremost figures were Antonio Fogazzaro, a novelist, and Luigi Pirandello,

who wrote both novels and verse. Norway emerged into literary prominence with the appearance of Björnson, who distinguished himself as a poet, dramatist, and novelist, and Henrik Ibsen, eminent as a dramatist, whose work affected the literary world powerfully. In Russia the most important figures were Leo Tolstoy, one of the greatest of Russian novelists; Anton Chekhov, notable for his short stories; and Maxim Gorky, who also excelled in the writing of short stories, to which, during his later years in the twentieth century, he added novels and dramas.

In England, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, and Henry James are best known for their novels, though Hardy and Meredith wrote poetry as well, and James wrote short stories and critical essays. Robert Louis Stevenson excelled in the essay, but wrote short stories, novels, and poetry besides. Associated more closely with the twentieth century are George Bernard Shaw, dramatist and critic; H. G. Wells, who has devoted himself to various forms of prose, including history, critical of the present or dreaming of better worlds to come; John Galsworthy and James Barrie, dramatists and novelists; and the poet and dramatist John Masefield. English literature was further enriched by several notable Irish writers, among them the poet William Yeats and the dramatist Lady Gregory.

From this list of those who have contributed to the literature of Western civilization since the beginning of the nineteenth century many names—some of them distinguished—have been omitted. Even so, a backward glance over the record will help us to realize that the century preceding the World War was one of the most prolific literary ages of history.

### Painting

The chief characteristic of nineteenth-century art is sentimental naturalism, which we may trace back to the eighteenth century, principally in the ideas of Rousseau. Rousseau, we have already noticed, chafed under the intellectual, political, and social restraints of the artificial civilization about him and

expressed his passion for freedom in the backward-looking idea of "back to nature." As the century wore on the prevailing interest in nature led painters to pay more attention to what nature is—in the actual color and structure of natural objects—so that painters began to substitute veracity for dreaminess. Naturalism became increasingly less sentimental. In the twentieth century, art freed itself completely of sentimentality. From what has just been said it is evident that during this period the romanticism of literature finds a counterpart in painting. The disillusionment following the apparent failure of the French Revolution produced in painting results similar to those produced in literature. There was a desire to escape the unhappy reality through the enjoyment of nature in painting, as men found enjoyment in the nature poetry of Wordsworth. Men turned not only to nature but to the past they had earlier tried to throw off. The past was romanticized, as in the novels of Walter Scott. Painters chose subjects from ancient history and classical mythology and from medieval Gothic. Anything remote and exotic was exploited. Interest was probably heightened in such subjects by a great increase in travel to foreign lands, induced in part by improved methods of transportation.

A lingering enthusiasm for liberty was reflected in pictures representing scenes from the past associated with the struggle for freedom, or introducing heroes and martyrs who had given themselves to the cause of freedom; while the growth of nationalism was reflected in painting and sculpture which served to stir patriotism as war posters do. The revolutions of 1830 and 1848 provided subject matter for many paintings—some encouraging the people to fight for their rights, others stressing the suffering that results from war, and the futility of it.

In subjects like these there is an evident attempt to bring art closer to life. The same purpose is indicated in paintings expressing sympathy for the underdog and resentment of social injustice. Here art reflects the humanitarianism of the period. But this concept of the function of art did not persist. During the last thirty years of the nineteenth cen-



ture there was again a turning away from everyday life to mythical or heroic subjects, with a new sense of form and design. The feeling for nature, however, was retained and even deepened.

During this interval an attempt to bring art into closer relation to life was made in England by William Morris, who was an artist as well as a poet, and who is still known for his fine bookmaking and furniture design. He gave voice to his abhorrence of the Industrial Revolution and its ugly results, which at that time were most conspicuous in England. While his painter friends were content to escape into the sensuous daydream of their art, Morris believed that art should cease to be an escape for the few. He wanted art to be applied to every aspect of life for the benefit of all. John Ruskin, the great art critic, agreed with him, as many thinkers have since. But in general the nineteenth century resented the very idea of bringing art close to everyday existence. Daily life was so drab for most people that if they cared at all for art they wanted to keep it poles apart from the real business of living.

It was toward the close of the nineteenth century that the rift between life and art began to be lessened, as the interest of painters grew ever less sentimental. Progress in this direction in the twentieth century has brought about a very significant departure from the typical nineteenth-century attitude of escape into a sentimentalized, nonhuman nature. Now the emphasis is upon what man can make for himself—not upon imitation and dreamy acceptance of nature, but upon man's own creative and clean-cut expression. Contemporary art, being proudly the product of human activity, takes its place among the everyday objects of man's invention. Recent paintings are not an escape. They find their subjects in the conditions of daily life—in work, play, meals; in the factory, the street, the home. Instead of avoiding machinery, artists borrow its forms and rhythms. And artists are being employed to improve the design of machines to make them more beautiful, with the result that we now feel that automobiles and airplanes, bridges and dams, are works of art. Every-

thing we use is being smoothed and streamlined—to look functional and slick. The new beauty is not added on like an ornament to the useful, but welded to it.

Of the hosts of artists who contributed to nineteenth-century painting, only the outstanding ones can be mentioned here. The leadership which France assumed in the eighteenth century continued throughout the nineteenth. She led in the production of important art; and Paris, then the greatest art center of Europe, radiated a marked influence over the art of other countries. The romantic mood in painting is particularly noticeable during the interval from 1830 to 1870. It is characteristic of the work of the French artist Delacroix who executed a number of huge canvases in dramatic style, dealing largely with Oriental subjects. Millet and Corot belonged to a French school of landscape painters; the first is famous for his sympathetic representations of peasant life, and the second, a prolific and popular painter, is best known perhaps for his twilight landscapes. Meissonier took his subjects from history and from everyday life. Daumier, little appreciated by his contemporaries, is now highly regarded for his portrayals of the life of Paris in his own day, "with the color of his own reactions to social inequality, bureaucratic stupidity, and miscarriage of justice." In England the romantic influence in painting is shown in the landscapes of Constable and Turner. Turner, the son of a London barber, reached the most exalted position in the history of English painting. Rossetti and Burne-Jones belonged to a small group of artists who strove to free English painting from the cramp of conventionalism by going back to the period before Raphael. They produced decorative effects with a richness that, as Hamann has observed, was a throwback to the medieval illumination of manuscripts.

After 1870 we enter what is described as an age of realism in art. The influence of the dominant bourgeoisie on painting was most pronounced during this period. Paintings were sold like other merchandise, and a flood of canvases, good, bad, and indifferent, poured into the houses of the wealthier classes; and many public buildings were generously embellished

with murals and sculpture.<sup>1</sup> The total product was increased by the contributions from several countries unrepresented by significant paintings during the earlier period.

During the period of "realism" France is represented by Manet, a painter of portraits, pleasing figure compositions, and a few nudes that made him a storm center in French art circles; Pissarro, who found subjects along the boulevards and rivers in Paris and other cities; Monet, who painted scenes from country and city to which he characteristically imparted misty atmospheric effects; Degas, best known for his pictures of ballet-dancers; Cézanne, perhaps the outstanding "realist" of the period, notable for his landscapes and subjects from still life; and Gauguin, who took refuge from civilization in the South Sea Islands, where he found subjects in the native landscape and native life, which he executed in bold strokes of vivid color. Representative of English art during this period is Frederick Leighton, a painter of classical subjects; and Whistler, American born, who lived and worked in England and is best known for his portraits. The outstanding artist of Belgium was Alma-Tadema, who did historical paintings and scenes from Greek and Roman life. Vincent van Gogh of The Netherlands produced some of the most striking works of later nineteenth-century painting, in his landscapes under bright sunlight, executed in glowing colors. Arnold Böcklin, a Swiss artist, gained a popular following for his landscapes and decorative designs based on classical subjects. John Sargent, born in Italy of American parents, worked and lived most of his life in England, where he earned a reputation for his portraits and mural paintings.

### Architecture

Architecture from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century was concerned most conspicuously with churches, castles, and palaces. But after the Industrial Revolution the dominating structures came to be government buildings, factories, banks, office buildings, and railway stations. This change is

<sup>1</sup>For an interesting discussion of the bourgeois influence on art, see Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art*, pp. 628, 687 ff., 795 ff.



significant as an expression of the influence of a new social order, but so far as basic architectural styles are concerned, the nineteenth century accomplished nothing but more or less clumsy imitations of what had been originated in past ages. Even in designing skyscrapers—the architectural pride of twentieth-century America—unimaginative architects, not seeing the possibilities here for something new under the sun, tried to mask the steel structure with imitations of Greek and Roman architecture. That the revolutionary changes of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries should have had no deeper influence seems odd, for architecture is the art which above all other arts should be responsive to the needs of daily life, since it is the art which cannot avoid affecting the conditions under which human activities are carried on.

This spirit of traditionalism explains why we can look over the architecture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and see imitations or adaptations of almost every style that Western civilization has produced—classical, romanesque, Byzantine, medieval Gothic, Renaissance (which is an adaptation of classical forms), and baroque. Of all of these styles, the classical and the Gothic have exerted the most pronounced influence upon nineteenth-century architecture.

To follow the historical development of the classical influence we must return for a moment to the eighteenth century when baroque set the fashion in building. Shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century signs were appearing in France of a growing distaste for the fantastic ornateness of the baroque—or of the rococo, as the extreme forms of baroque were called in France.<sup>1</sup> Before the close of the century the distaste had grown into a revolt, and there was a return to the simplicity of Greek and Roman architecture. The change is spoken of as the classical revival. It spread from France to other parts of Europe and led to the construction of numerous public buildings, churches included, in imitation of Greek or Roman temples. It was the classical revival that influenced the so-called colonial type of building in the United States. Then, in the third decade of the nineteenth century, came a

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 354.

Gothic revival. Just as the disillusionment following the French Revolution led some writers to find refuge in a romanticized past, as in the case of Walter Scott who glorified the Middle Ages, so architects turned back to the Gothic. There followed a period when Gothic and classical styles contended for acceptance by architects and public, an episode referred to as the "battle of the styles." Both styles continued to affect architecture. Influence of the Gothic, for example, is strikingly reflected in the British Houses of Parliament and in many nineteenth-century churches; also in many recent churches and in some university buildings in the United States. The classical influence is revealed in all types of buildings.

It is only in the last few decades that signs have appeared of a marked decline in the influence of traditional styles in the art of building. The age of science and machinery is beginning to express itself more decisively in architecture. The modern skyscraper admirably meets the need of concentrating and speeding up business and exchange in the heart of a crowded city. It is made possible by fireproof steel construction and modern electric elevators—products of the Industrial Revolution. The deviations from the past here represented indicate a movement away from the slavish adoption of old architectural styles. About 1920, largely under the influence of the American architect Louis Sullivan, the borrowed fronts and ornaments began to be abandoned; the lines of the structure itself were allowed to show their clean beauty. Examples of this are the News Building and the Empire State Building in New York. But nearly every large American city now has fine examples of its own.

The same tendency is becoming visible in domestic architecture, particularly of the so-called "modern style," which has made considerable progress in Europe. The desire is to make the individual dwelling or apartment house, whether for rich or poor, more livable and attractive, more responsive to needs and desires. One tendency is to make the home as efficient and functional as a factory or automobile; to get rid of stuffiness and fussy complexity. Another tendency is to make the home more agreeable in interior color and furniture

design, so that the love of beauty will be satisfied by the house itself without the addition of works of art. The modern house is not necessarily standardized. It may have great individuality and intimacy.<sup>1</sup>

Significant in modern architecture is the trend toward planning whole communities, even cities, to blend the beautiful and the useful and to shut out ugliness and waste, not only for a few fortunate persons, but for everyone. This is difficult where towns have grown up haphazardly and the mistakes of the past have first to be cleared away. But costly as slum-clearance is, the saving in health and happiness is increasingly felt to be worth it. The laying out of new boulevard and park systems, the zoning of industrial and residence sections, and the elimination of congestion both in traffic and in housing, are now taken for granted as a part of progress.

### Music

The death of Beethoven in 1826 marks the end of the classical period in music and the beginning of the Romantic period. With few deviations, romantic music, passing through several stages, continued throughout the nineteenth century. The leading characteristics of Romanticism have been indicated. They are reflected in music as truly as in the other arts—a spirit of nationalism, and a spirit of extreme individualism that expressed itself through the medium of the feelings and experiences of the author in unrestrained flights of the imagination. The declining influence of religion is shown in the dominance of secular music, and music's broadening utility in a society becoming democratic is shown in the truly public character which music now took on as a distinct feature of the new age.

Secular music for the public found two main outlets—the opera and the concert. They offered the listener effective means of deliverance from reality, in an age when music was

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<sup>1</sup>The following books by Sheldon Cheney give a good idea of twentieth-century art: *The New World Architecture*, 1930; *A Primer of Modern Art*, 1932; *Art and the Machine*, 1936. Also of interest with regard to modern design in industry and in the home are: *Horizons*, by Norman Bel Geddes, 1932; *Technics and Civilization*, by Lewis Mumford, 1934.



romantically thought of as expressing the genius of a soaring personality who could lift his listeners out of the drabness of everyday into a world of harmony. The opera-goer watched a visible counterpart of this world on the stage; the concert-goer, often with the help of suggestions from the program, might supply his own daydreams to illustrate what he heard. But the trained listener became so absorbed in the music that he preferred not to think of anything aside from the music itself.

The names of the outstanding masters of the nineteenth century are familiar to the public today, for they, together with the great masters of the classical era, continue to furnish the mass of what has enduring value in music. Beethoven's music was prophetic of change, since it contained strong Romantic elements; Beethoven was "the colossal genius who dominates the whole nineteenth century." But Franz Schubert and Karl Weber more completely represent the Romantic characteristics of music, although both lived and worked during the last decades of the classical period. The listing of the important names of those who followed will give some idea of the richness of the nineteenth century in the realm of music. Among German composers we must add Mendelssohn, Schumann, Meyerbeer, Wagner, Brahms, Richard Strauss, and Johann Strauss. From Italy we have the productions of Paganini, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and Puccini; from France the works of Bizet, Debussy, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, and Massenet. Among Polish composers the outstanding name is Chopin; among the Czechs, Liszt and Dvořák; among the Norwegians, Grieg; and among the Russians, Tschaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. To this list we must add one English composer of popular renown, Arthur Sullivan.

Into the confusion of twentieth-century music we shall not venture, a confusion expressing the chaos of contemporary society. It is evident, however, that despite the flowing tide of musical dross, music of lasting value is being produced today. And whatever may be said of the demoralizing effect of mechanized music on public taste, the fact remains that the

phonograph and the radio have greatly increased the opportunity to hear the best music and are spreading a taste for it. Religious music, songs, and dance music are still popular; but pure music, apart from associations of any kind, is being valued more and more as one of the finest things in Western civilization. (For a summary of the civilization of the Bourgeois Era see Appendix, p. 1044.)

### THE SPREAD OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

The dissemination of Western culture has been impressive in its scope. Making its appearance in a small corner of Europe, it spread through the agency of the Greeks and Romans until it covered the whole Mediterranean area. This was its limit at the beginning of the Middle Ages. In fact, as the medieval period wore on, the boundaries of Western culture were driven in and it lost ground in the Near East and in northern Africa. To compensate for these losses, however, the Church had established vitalizing contacts between the Mediterranean area and every corner of Europe. By the close of the Middle Ages Western civilization had become essentially European.

With the opening of the modern period a new chapter began in the spread of Western culture. It crossed the seas and penetrated every continent. From the sixteenth century down to the present, European civilization has never ceased to spread, for always there has been a stimulus to excite the impulse to expand. The zealous wish to spread Christianity, the desire for wealth, the need to relieve the overcrowded condition in certain parts of Europe, the Industrial Revolution with its accompanying demands for raw materials and new markets, the triumph of the bourgeoisie lured by a passion for commercial gain, the development of self-centered national states intent upon economic and political security—each has had its influence.

Commerce, travel, and missionary work have been factors in this process, but during the Bourgeois Era, imperialism, involving all of these, has been the most impressive movement

in the extension of Western civilization. As we shall see in a later chapter, imperialism in its present form is an integral part of our modern capitalistic system. However selfish the motives back of the movement, imperialism has been the great carrier of Western ideas and practices. Today the Oriental peoples are slowly coming to terms with science and the machine, and with the passing of time the lines of cultural differentiation between East and West are growing less sharp; even the backward peoples in Africa are being subjected to the relentless pressure of imperialism. Is Western civilization ultimately to become a world civilization?

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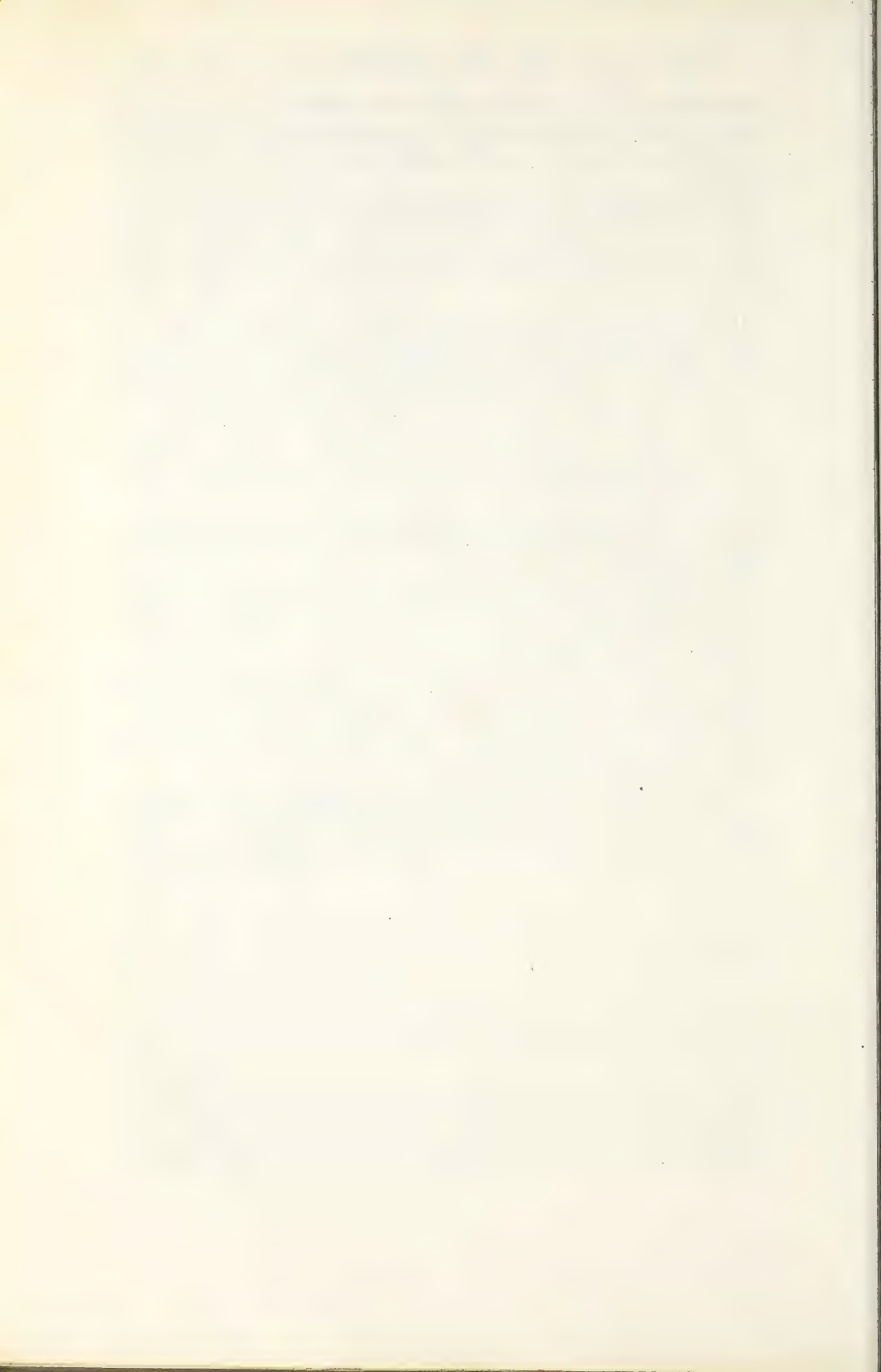
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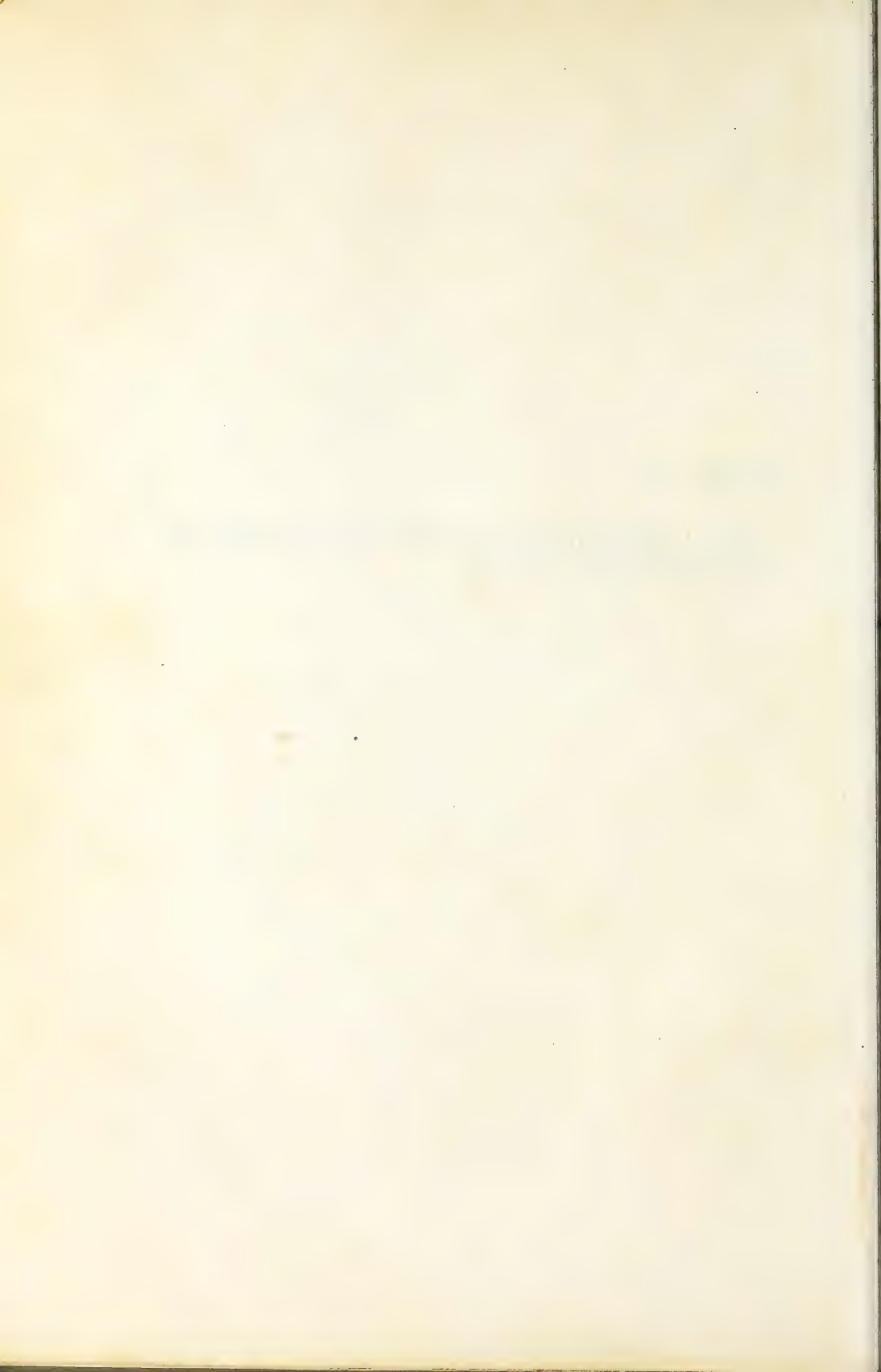
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## **PART III**

### **SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND INSTITUTIONS IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION**





## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND INSTITUTIONS: AN INTRODUCTION

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OUR LONG SURVEY of the development of Western society has now come to a close. The attempt has been made to picture the succession of civilizations that have preserved a cultural continuity from the Stone Ages down to our own day. Against this background we now wish to examine in greater detail certain social phenomena of primary importance to an understanding of the character and workings of human society. It will be remembered that a comparative study of the cultures of the world reveals the interesting fact that despite wide variations cultures appear to conform to a fairly definite pattern. Wissler called it the universal culture pattern. Within the pattern certain culture traits—economic, political, religious, and so on—are common to all cultures. It was suggested that these traits common to all cultures might well result from important social needs common to all. It will occur to anyone who considers the matter thoughtfully that these needs are not ordinarily satisfied by individuals working or acting independently as individuals but by individuals working or acting as members of groups. Their actions are part of organized plans dictated by experience as best suited to meet the needs both of the individuals and of the groups to which they belong. It is these patterns of social organization that

we wish to examine, particularly those forms of social organization called institutions.

### **Social organization and human needs**

Before we proceed to define institutions, the fundamental relationship of social organizations to the satisfaction of human needs should be made clear. Little doubt exists that men can secure a more complete satisfaction of their wants by working together than each individual can obtain through his own unaided efforts. In getting a living, for example, the modern laborer enjoys a high standard as contrasted with that of the isolated person who, alone, tries to wrest his living from nature. Similarly, men acquire knowledge more speedily through absorbing an accumulated culture heritage than they can learn by depending entirely upon their own individual experiences. The truly "self-educated" man does not exist; the so-called self-educated one always depends upon group life for the great bulk of his knowledge, standards, and ideals. Play activities also give greater human satisfaction when the participant shares his fun with others. If the inquiring student should go through the entire catalogue of human desires, he would discover few, if any, human wants that can be better satisfied by an individual acting alone than with the help of others. Institutions depend upon this fact. Men have found during the long course of human existence that certain kinds of social relations seem to possess a special value in satisfying certain of his wants. When they discover an especially satisfying relation they tend to preserve it as highly important to human welfare, and they teach it to their children. The basic patterns of social relations which men perpetuate as the most effective means of satisfying their desires become the institutions of their civilization.

### **WHAT IS AN INSTITUTION?**

Man's desires are varied and numerous; consequently his institutions are varied and numerous. Any attempt to treat all social institutions would carry us far beyond the purposes of this volume. The term "institution" as used in these pages



has a much broader connotation than that of ordinary, everyday usage. When the man on the street uses the term "institution" he usually refers to a home for the aged, an orphan asylum, a reform school for delinquents, a hospital for the insane, or some similar agency which offers care to the unfortunate delinquent, dependent, or defective members of the population. Although welfare organizations do constitute part of the institutional structure of modern social life, they form only one small part of it. More important and more fundamental in civilization are the great economic, political, religious, domestic, and educational institutions. It is these that we wish to examine in the remaining chapters of this book. They serve the most vital needs of man in society—his need of subsistence, of social order and protection, of spiritual satisfaction, of race preservation, and of the transmission of his culture and his ideals. The term "institution" is to be so broadly defined in this study as to include all of these imposing social structures.

### **Institutions as patterns of social relations**

What has already been said of man's disposition to satisfy his wants by coöperative effort prepares us for the declaration that the most important single statement that may be made in describing or defining an institution is that it consists essentially of a pattern of social relations. All other attributes of an institution obtain their meaning in connection with this basic feature. An institutional pattern constitutes a mold which shapes the forms of the important, permanent, concrete groups within a given field of human activity. For example, the family institution of Western civilization consists of a more or less standard pattern of social relations consisting of father, mother, and children. This traditional pattern determines the essential features of the concrete family group of Mr. and Mrs. John Doe and their children. Mr. Doe, like other fathers within his civilization, has typical duties to perform in relation to his wife and children: if he is able-bodied he supports them; in emergencies he is called upon to protect them; he establishes a home for them; he serves as a companion and

advisor; and, if the culture pattern requires, he administers punishment to them. At the same time Mrs. Doe and each of the children are molded by the institutional pattern so that they have typical relations with Mr. Doe and with one another. Notwithstanding the fact that this concrete family group differs in hundreds of details from its neighbors, it conforms to a general institutional pattern which shapes the family life of most domestic groups within the United States. Similarly, the factory as an institutional pattern consists of a typical set of relations which unites employers and workers into a functioning unit; a relation in which each has recognized rights and duties. This institutional mold helps to shape the relations of men to one another in the various concrete factories existing in the region dominated by the civilization. Thus, every institution consists of a typical pattern of social relations, by means of which human beings associate with one another in order better to satisfy their individual wants. The institution is not a concrete social group, it is the traditional pattern or mold which shapes the concrete groups in which men live.

The fact that institutions consist of patterns of relations implies that the parts played by individuals within them take the form of social roles. Thus, "father" is not merely one single concrete person except when applied to one specific individual within a given family group. In a broader and more fundamental sense, "father" is a social role which is played by millions of men of each succeeding generation. The role of father may be played by as many persons as there are separate family groups. In this broader sense the role of father corresponds to the role of Antonio in Shakespeare's play, a role which has been played by hundreds of individual actors, and which may be played simultaneously by as many persons as there are casts of players. Each institution of a civilization consists of an organization of the roles which are demanded by the institutional pattern. The roles of citizen, president; senator, student, teacher, son, daughter, husband, foreman, employer, and judge are examples of the institutional roles with which the student will be familiar.

The institutional patterns and roles of a civilization ordinarily descend to each succeeding generation as part of the culture heritage. Only rarely does any given generation invent a completely new type or form of institution. A single generation, if it accomplishes anything at all, ordinarily makes minor changes in the existing traditional pattern. Most of the basic institutions of contemporary Western civilization have been developed in the course of long centuries of experience, and have been accepted by the present generation without much critical thought.

### The machinery of an institution

The institutional roles and patterns described above may be observed by anyone who will consciously look for them. Their social significance is likely to be overlooked, however, because they are commonplace. Yet, if we take thought of the matter, it appears remarkable that, speaking generally, all human beings, man, woman, and child, fall into their appropriate roles and conform to the institutional patterns. How is this result accomplished? It is the result of a combination of forces operating through both social and material machinery. The social machinery may display itself in the form of *regularized behavior, supporting sentiments and feelings, and devices for perpetuation*. The material machinery may consist of buildings, tools, or other equipment which members use in their relations with one another. The forces involved and the machinery through which they act are products of historical development. They need to be understood if we are to comprehend the tremendous power which institutions wield and the success with which they operate.

The regularized behavior which occurs within an institution and makes for its effective operation, may take many forms, of which folkways and mores, ceremonial and ritual, and formal laws are most important.

Folkways and mores constitute the most widespread forms of regularized behavior within institutions. *Folkways* are those customs which are performed more or less spontaneously and uncritically, but which have not been defined as possessing



moral value. They are illustrated by those customs which one labels "good form"—such as eating with proper utensils, dressing within the limits of good taste, greeting one's friends in the accepted manner, and observing various other items of ordinary etiquette. *Mores*, which are more fundamental than folkways, consist of customs to which a moral sanction has been attached. They include social standards, such as honesty and sex conduct. *Taboos* are negative mores. Mores are usually accepted and followed without resort to force. These regularized ways of acting sometimes become so firmly fixed in the human nature of the members that they seem sacred in themselves. The taboo of cannibalism, for example, which is planted deep within the mores of every community of Western civilization, could hardly be made the subject for serious debate outside a hospital for the insane. In contrast, some communities which practice cannibalism give this custom strong moral and religious sanction. Every institution contains numerous illustrations of customary ways of acting—folkways and mores—which make group life smooth and efficient.

Some institutions develop elaborate ceremonies and rituals as part of their social machinery. Ceremonies are usually performed as a means of formally admitting a person to a new set of relations and obligations. Initiation, installation, inauguration, and wedding ceremonies are examples that come to mind. They all illustrate one important form of regularized institutional behavior. Ritual, as contrasted with ceremony, consists of more or less elaborate forms of behavior which may be repeated from time to time as a means of giving opportunity for self-expression or of strengthening one's faith by identifying the participant repeatedly and publicly with the institution. It thus serves to unify the membership and to prepare it for more effective collective behavior. The rituals which are performed in fraternal orders and in churches constitute excellent examples of this sort of regularized behavior.

Some institutions, especially the state, enact formal laws. A law is a rule of behavior backed by force or the threat of force. The law sets forth objectively and concisely a rule of

behavior which has been consciously formed and made enforceable through the power of a governmental authority.

Other types of regularized behavior may possibly be found within institutions. Moreover, the forms mentioned above may be found in various combinations. With the exception of folkways and mores, no particular forms seem essential to the existence of an institution. Some forms of regularized behavior are, however, essential to institutional organization. ✓

Accompanying and supporting the regularized institutional patterns of behavior are numerous sentiments, beliefs, ideas, and group symbols which, in some combination, form an inevitable component of every institution. They furnish the emotional appeal of an institution, and supply the driving force which inspires the members to vigorous defense whenever the institution appears to be threatened. Patriotism, for example, composed of sentiments and beliefs, gives high emotional value to the state. Strong appeals to patriotic sentiments are often made in defense of national institutions when they are confronted by dangers either fancied or real. A second example may be found in the emotions, sentiments, and beliefs that express themselves in devotion to the church, even to an extreme degree of fanaticism or of martyrdom. Group symbols, such as the national flag, the Cross, or the fraternal emblem, serve as external manifestations of group sentiments.

Institutions make use of materials, buildings, and tools. A modern school, for example, requires buildings, furniture, books, and other materials. The church may use an imposing building, altar, pews, hymnals, musical instruments, and perhaps athletic equipment. The family uses its home, furniture, mechanical contrivances, and personal equipment of members. These material devices which the institution uses for efficiency are sometimes wrongly confused with the institution itself. The building is never the church or school. The house is never the family. Institutions are always social phenomena, not material. They may and do use material equipment, but these material tools are machinery which makes for the efficiency of the institution and are in no sense the institution itself. ✓



Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of an institution, that which marks it off from other patterns of social life, is its *organization for perpetuation*. Without some machinery for its perpetuation a pattern of social relations cannot with certainty be classified as an institution. The nature of this perpetuating machinery may vary with different institutions and in various civilizations. It may be set up within the institution itself, as in the case of the Roman Catholic Church, which contains its own machinery of perpetuation; or it may be transferred to some inclusive social machinery, of which the institution in question is only a part. For example, the state serves as the machinery for perpetuating the family and the school in modern Western civilization. In one sense, the modern state, conceived as an all-inclusive organization, serves to perpetuate and protect all the other recognized institutions of the population. The state guarantees the rights of religious groups to continue their association without interference, it lays down laws designed to promote and continue domestic and educational institutions, and it regulates and otherwise governs economic organization. Smaller units of social organization than the state may in similar fashion become the protector of still smaller sub-units, as, for example, a national fraternal organization which attempts to perpetuate and protect local chapters. Some machinery for perpetuation and protection is a mark of a true institution. Any social group whose form has not been recognized as sufficiently vital to warrant the group's organizing for its perpetuation is not sufficiently basic and permanent to merit the title institution.

#### Summary definition of an institution

From the foregoing discussion we may extract the elements for a summarized definition of an institution. It may be defined as a "basic, relatively permanent pattern of social relations which functions to satisfy one or more deep human needs, and which molds the concrete forms of domestic, educational, economic, or political groups in which men live; a pattern in which most members of the civilization normally play distinc-



tive roles and which seems so important that they have provided social machinery in order to maintain it."<sup>1</sup>

## HOW DID INSTITUTIONS ORIGINATE?

### The unsolved problem of origins

All attempts to discover the original forms of institutions have failed. Their absolute beginnings are lost in the mists of prehistory. Students of prehistoric cultures, it will be recalled, depend for such knowledge as they have upon material remains. But institutions are social structures and therefore nonmaterial. Hence they have left no direct material records of their past forms or of their development.

Nevertheless students have attempted to formulate acceptable conclusions based on certain inferences. For example, evidence dating back as far as the middle Paleolithic indicates that tools were carefully buried with the dead. From these discoveries it has been inferred that Paleolithic men believed in an after-life and therefore probably possessed some sort of religious institution. Even if such a conclusion is accepted, it throws no light on the specific form of the institution. Examples of Paleolithic art have been preserved which have been interpreted as indicating a belief in magic. Magic is closely related to religion in primitive societies, but again, granting the correctness of the interpretation, the question touching the character of possible religious institutions in Paleolithic times remains unanswered. The conclusion seems to be inescapable that fossil and cultural deposits can furnish neither direct nor indirect evidence which will illuminate the origins of institutional forms.

A second line of approach to the problem of institutional origins has been the study of institutions in the simple societies of contemporary preliterate peoples. This approach has also proved to be a blind alley, for the student cannot be certain that the institutions of these groups correspond to the original institutional forms. As he passes from one preliterate group

<sup>1</sup>Quotation from Quinn, J. A., *The Social World and Its Institutions* (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1937), p. 483.

to another he finds wide variations in institutional forms, even among peoples whose cultures remain at extremely simple levels. How, then, would one choose the original form from among these variants? Moreover, each of these preliterate cultures is, itself, very old. Probably each of them has changed considerably from its original form during the thousands of years of its history. No one of them may be taken as illustrating the original form of social life.

Still other possibilities have been explored by students of culture, but always with negative results. It appears certain that the absolute origins of any forms of institutions cannot be determined by any method of investigation which has been devised or which can now be imagined.

### Sumner's theory of institutional origins

In a notable book entitled *Folkways*, W. G. Sumner has approached the question of institutional origins in a novel way. Recognizing the futility of arriving at scientific conclusions on the basis of available evidence, he has utilized the scholar's knowledge of the general conditions of human existence which have been important in the rise of various types of specialized institutions in modern civilization as a guide in projecting a picture of the possible way in which institutions originally arose.

In brief, his theory of the origin of institutions is as follows: Human beings strive to satisfy their desires with as little inconvenience as possible. When they are confronted with a new problem of adjustment to their environment, each one attempts to solve it in his own way. The results of some are more successful than others. Since, however, men live in groups and are in constant communication with one another, the least successful members copy the actions of those who have developed more efficient procedures. Gradually all the members of the group begin to practice the method which proves best, and they come to feel that this accepted way of acting promotes the welfare of the group and should be followed to the exclusion of any other. They transmit the custom with their sanction to the succeeding generation, whose

members uncritically accept it as valid, and are thus relieved of working out their own adjustment to the situation. Each later generation is thus able to profit by the experience of its ancestors by taking a "short cut" to accumulated knowledge; or, as one author strikingly puts it, each is able "to stand on the shoulders of the preceding generation." When the custom which has thus been selected and transmitted consists of a fundamental type of relation of man to man, it lays the basis for the appearance of an institution.

Sometimes one of these patterns of social life which has been accepted as fundamental by a group may be challenged by a variant member. Orthodox members of the group then rally to its defense. At this time of crisis the leaders explicitly formulate the rules of behavior and articles of belief which are required in order to conform to the accepted pattern, and pronounce them to be fundamental for the guidance of group members. If the pattern of relations seems of sufficient importance, the group inaugurates some more or less formal means for preserving and perpetuating it, which act constitutes the final step in the formation of the institution.

### **Human needs and the rise of institutions**

Sumner's theory suggests an interesting and illuminating line of speculation concerning the rise of institutions. In the light of the undoubted influence of human needs on the rise and development of institutional forms, let us examine the general circumstances attending the rise of some of our modern institutions. We shall confine the discussion to the state, the school, and marriage and the family.

The state in modern society is a practically all-inclusive political institution. Its fundamental functions are to maintain an orderly existence within the state society and to protect it from external dangers. These functions are performed through the instrumentality of government. Such an institution is a product of a complex civilization. No institution such as the state is necessary in simple preliterate groups where each member knows every other personally and where all remain rigidly under the control of folkways and mores. In



populations numbering many millions, however, in which men have crowded together in huge cities where widely contrasting cultures have been brought into close prolonged contact, new social machinery has been developed to supplement the folkways, mores, and public opinion of simpler groups. Thus the state represents the emergence of quite a different form of institution with new instruments and new methods of social control backed by irresistible power. Under the trying conditions of complex social life characterized by conflicting group interests and contrasting standards of social morality and behavior, the state operates to assure obedience to rules which appear essential to group welfare. Where persuasion fails, the state uses force. Moreover, in modern social life, where powerful, sovereign, national groups attempt to live close together, the state has been regarded as a necessary device for protecting its citizens from injury by foreigners. The state developed as a means of control through force because some such device became necessary in complex impersonal civilizations where customary controls of kinship and neighborhood groups were no longer adequate.

The rise and development of specialized educational institutions offers illustration of the potent influence of changed conditions upon institutional forms. The school arose out of man's character as a cultured human being. ( Within civilizations where the simple culture heritage was easy to master, each generation could absorb it through casual daily contact with its elders, and no specialized relationship between teacher and pupil was necessary. ) As civilization grew increasingly complex and the mass of recorded knowledge grew to immeasurable proportions, the earlier simple educational process no longer sufficed. The immensity of the body of knowledge that needed to be mastered and the overwhelming mass of details touching the operations of everyday life that needed to be brought under control drove society to specialized education. Transmission of the highly complex culture heritage could no longer be left to the everyday casual contacts of the child with his elders. Some simplification and organization of the culture heritage was necessary in order that the most important

elements might be transmitted from generation to generation in usable form. The school, which consists of a teacher-student relation, developed in response to this need. The teacher represents a specialist in certain aspects of the culture heritage. The functions of such specialists are to organize and simplify their particular field of culture and to transmit it effectively to the members of the succeeding generation.

The development of domestic institutions seems to be definitely related to a fundamental need of race survival. In other words, it was a biological need that led to the development of family and marriage relations. Domestic groups do not exist among all species of animals, not even among all which require union of the two sexes for reproduction. For example, the relations between male and female insects of many species cease after fertilization of the ova has been accomplished; the female deposits the fertilized eggs in some satisfactory spot where they may be hatched by the action of the elements, and neither the adult female nor the male affords any sort of protection or care to the eggs or to the newly hatched young. These infant insects are independent and self-supporting from the moment of hatching. Reptiles frequently show the same lack of parental care. The mammals, representing a higher stage of animal life, exhibit greater permanence in the relation of young and old. Among the higher animals, whose offspring experience a longer period of immaturity and are more completely dependent upon adults, a longer period of union exists between mother and offspring. Among some mammals the female is partially incapacitated during her reproductive period, and the male coöperates in caring for her and her young. In case of man, the highest mammal, the traits of dependence of offspring and incapacity of the female are most pronounced.

The foregoing facts, together with others found in animal life, suggest the following conclusions: (1) As increasingly complex forms of animal life have developed, they have tended to produce fewer offspring, progressively more helpless at birth, and dependent through an ever-increasing period of time. The survival of the higher species demanded more

effective parental care of the less numerous but more dependent offspring. The family as an institution probably emerged to meet this demand. The family became more inevitable and more enduring as the helplessness of the young increased in degree and duration. (2) Marriage, the enduring union of adults of opposite sexes, probably arose as a result of the need of coöperation between parents in the care of immature offspring and of the protection of the incapacitated female by the male. The family was therefore the first domestic form, with marriage developing out of it. (3) Sex was not the factor directly responsible for the origin of either marriage or the family. Sexual union for procreative purposes is found among the insects, but neither marriage nor the family appears there. Sexual union is of course necessary for the biological production of offspring among higher biological types, and without it there could be no family. But it is not the factor which accounts for the origin of the protracted association of parents and children in the family or of male and female in marriage.

#### INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

The preceding brief discussion of the rise and development of institutions in response to human needs and the tendency of institutions to change with changing needs may convey an idea of institutional instability. Generally speaking, history does reveal institutions in process of periodically sloughing off useless parts and adding new ones, abandoning old functions and taking on new ones—always with the aim of more satisfactory adjustment to changing demands. Nevertheless, the picture presented in general terms may be misleading. One of the most impressive facts of history is its continuity, and the continuity of history is largely an expression of the continuity of institutional development. The tremendous force of custom and tradition and the vested interests of influential classes whose fortunes, both material and social, are bound up with existing institutions tend to preserve these institutions against radical alterations. This is not to say that fundamental changes in institutions do not occur. The survey of Western



civilization from its beginnings to the present, which we have just completed, reveals culture change as one of the most impressive facts of history; but it reveals also that fundamental changes in institutions usually occur slowly over a considerable period. Abrupt changes of a fundamental nature are comparatively rare in history and are commonly the result of revolutionary explosions. It will be well, therefore, to consider first the stability of institutional life. ✓

### **The persistence of basic patterns** ✓

Institutions form the stable framework of a civilization. The basic pattern of social relations involved in institutional types and forms ordinarily persists for generations or centuries notwithstanding the seemingly rapid changes which sometimes occur. In the United States, for example, rapid changes have taken place in social life during the recent decades, with the result that members of each generation feel that they live in a social world so different from that of their parents that the experiences of the latter can scarcely guide them in their own problems of social adjustment.

That numerous significant changes do occur within each generation in the modern world cannot be controverted. In the political field of our own country innumerable social changes have occurred since the founding of the Republic, and numerous demands have been made on government to accept new approaches and create new mechanisms to solve the resulting problems. A train of political reforms has resulted. Nevertheless, the basic pattern of our government has remained unchanged since the adoption of the Federal Constitution. That important document set the main framework for the governmental organization in the United States, an organization which has undergone only minor changes throughout the century and a half of its operation. Essentially the same officials—president, vice-president, senators, representatives, judges—play their roles today as in the early days of national history. Citizens enjoy essentially the same civil liberties that were defined in our Bill of Rights—the ten amendments adopted almost immediately after the Constitu-

tion itself was ratified. Similarly, in economic life the basic patterns of institutional organization—capitalistic system, private ownership of wealth, freedom of enterprise, and roles of employer and employee—have persisted throughout American history since the early days of colonial settlement, and continue to hold out today in the face of a flood of criticism. Likewise the basic patterns of permanent monogamic marriage, semi-patriarchal family, Christian church, and public schools have persisted over many decades. The student who peers behind the numerous changes in social life discovers that most of them have been somewhat superficial as contrasted with the basic elements of the pattern which persist. He sees also that those changes which do occur ordinarily take place so slowly that the basic patterns of institutional life remain stable throughout long periods of time.

#### **Why institutions change**

It appears from what is said above that institutional changes are of two kinds: (1) They may be fundamental, involving alterations in the basic structure of an institution. (2) They may be incidental, involving minor changes within the basic framework. Both kinds of change occur in the history of institutions. Fundamental changes are relatively few and usually come about slowly. Incidental changes are frequent and less significant. Both are an inevitable accompaniment of dynamic social life, and both are responses to changing social needs.

What is the nature of the forces that throw institutions out of adjustment to society? They are many. A few of the important ones may be mentioned. In the long course of history conditions of existence change. For example, geographers believe that fundamental changes in climate have occurred in various parts of the world and that these changes in external environment have necessitated numerous alterations of the social structure. The tremendous growth of population with its extreme complexity has set new problems for social adjustment. The revolutionary advances in mechanical production and in rapid, efficient long-distance transportation and

communication, known as the Industrial Revolution, have greatly complicated the social scene. Whenever such fundamental changes occur in any phase of geographic environment, population, or material culture, social institutions must adjust themselves to the new conditions of life. Moreover, when one institution changes, others also must make some adjustment, or the institutional organization will be thrown out of balance. Any new conditions of life will, therefore, require changes in some part of the institutional machinery.

Examples of fundamental institutional changes come to mind when we take a backward glance at the civilizations described in preceding chapters. We recall the displacement of monarchy by democracy in Greek city-states, a transformation largely the result of economic and population changes; the disappearance of city-state government in Italy when the vast geographical extension of Roman territory led to the development of a highly centralized imperial government; the collapse of Roman institutions in the fifth century A. D. under the impact of deep-seated social and economic changes. The simple village organization called the manor persisted for centuries during the Middle Ages and finally disappeared under the pressure of increasing population and of forces created by the great commercial and industrial changes in the modern period. The medieval guild likewise dissolved under pressure of its own inefficiency and its failure to adjust to changing economic demands. The city-states of early Greece and Rome obviously could not satisfy the needs of the great populations of modern Europe, America, and Asia. Such examples demonstrate the important truth that every social institution, no matter how firm and permanent it seems to be at any particular time, must in the long run undergo changes if it is to meet the needs of changing times.

### PROBLEMS OF SOCIETY AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Institutions should function in the service of men, not men in the service of institutions. This notion of institutions serving merely as devices for the satisfaction of human needs has



been widely recognized and accepted in our civilization. It may be found in classical form in one of the great political documents of the United States, which declares that government exists for the sake of securing rights to its citizens. The traditional attitude of the United States holds that no institution is sacred in itself—that whenever it fails to satisfy human needs most effectively it should be either altered or abandoned. The most effective satisfaction of human needs implies the satisfaction of individual needs; but it does not imply the right of an individual or of groups of individuals to regard and to use institutions as tools for the selfish exploitation of other portions of the population. Institutions which permit and encourage such exploitation are defective to that extent. The ideal form of any institution is that which permits the greatest satisfaction of the needs of the greatest number of persons. Fortunately, in social life the fundamental individual interests of one man do not necessarily contradict those of another. If institutions are properly adjusted, all members may obtain richer satisfactions than any one member could gain by working alone. Even in modern economic life characterized by violent opposition between capital and labor, between worker and worker, and between employer and employer—an opposition which sometimes permits some persons to injure and exploit others—the complex system of economic institutions produces an average standard of living vastly higher than could be obtained through isolated individual effort. In the final analysis every institution must be judged in its own period by its end results. The ideal to be sought is the maximum satisfaction of all members of the population which the institution is designed to serve.

### **Problems of institutional change**

A little reflection will show that most of our perplexing problems of social life result from our failure to keep institutional machinery properly geared to the society it is supposed to serve. Man invents material tools and machinery to meet his economic needs. He just as truly invents social machinery to meet specific social needs. His chief social tools are insti-

tutions. Hence, when considerable parts of the population find themselves frustrated in satisfying their legitimate desires as human beings, they commonly cast an inquiring eye upon their institutions as a likely source of their trouble and as the most hopeful promise of relief. More frequently than not they turn to the state as the one institution with power and authority over both individuals and other institutions. Rarely is a remedy sought by the destruction of institutions. Usually it is sought by the creation of new institutional mechanisms, mere additions to existing institutions.

The analogy drawn here between the invention of material tools and of social tools might make it appear at first glance that man should be able to solve the problems of society with greater facility than he now does. His success in the invention of material tools to increase subsistence has been prodigious. In contrast, his failure to keep pace in the invention of social tools has been strikingly conspicuous. The reason for the contrast is not far to seek. Both kinds of invention—material and social—have been beset by many difficult problems. But social inventions, which usually involve institutional changes, must contend with intangible forces of opposition arising out of the very nature of man and his culture—forces which create obstacles of a kind seldom encountered by the inventor of material tools.<sup>1</sup> Reference has already been made to the resistance to institutional change from powerful individuals and groups in society whose vested interests may be disturbed by change, and from the opposing forces of tradition.

Because institutional patterns seem so important to those who have lived their lives under them, they are frequently permitted to retain old forms after those forms have ceased to be efficient. The tradition which supports the tried and true ways of the fathers sometimes leads to blind adherence to customary social forms after they have become barriers to progress and to adequate social adjustment. The sentiments and

<sup>1</sup>It is true that the utilization of inventions has sometimes been delayed by the violent opposition of traditionalists. The history of railway transportation offers examples in point. It is also true that industrial corporations sometimes hold valuable inventions out of use, for business reasons.

emotions which cling to church creeds, economic traditions, national emblems, and other institutional patterns, serve as rallying points around which members organize to defend their cherished institution against attacks which threaten its ancient form. As a result, institutional forms sometimes persist as empty shells long after their usefulness has ceased. Sometimes social groups which have been cast in an outworn institutional mold find it necessary to spend their full time and effort in keeping themselves going, and have no additional energy left for performing other useful social functions.

(When institutions become highly crystallized, they sometimes lead to revolution; the stubborn refusal of those in the seats of authority to give up their vested positions may appear to leave no other alternative to the less fortunate who may rightly attribute their painful situation in life to the maladjustment of institutions to the social conditions of the time.) Under such conditions these underprivileged members of society may seek to overthrow the whole institutional order to open the way for one more tolerable. Revolutions are usually directed against the government of the state. By reason of the supreme authority of the state, government is in a position to effect institutional changes, or it may suppress demands for change by force. Suppression frequently drives the discontented elements into secret cover where they may grow strong enough to organize a formidable and successful revolt. Political revolution is not likely to occur except in times of repression, when channels of communication and methods of peaceful social adjustment have been closed. Radical movements thrive best when ultraconservative or reactionary leaders in places of authority and power close their eyes to the simple fact that the crystallization of institutions constitutes the gravest danger to an orderly and reasonably contented society.

Other problems of institutional change arise out of conditions less definitely within man's control, problems incidental to culture lags. Specialized institutions sometimes tend to become isolated, lose touch with the main currents of contemporary civilization, and lag behind other important social de-



velopments. The modern political state, for example, has remained highly nationalistic and local, while the economic development has created a world economic order in which states are interdependent parts. Thus modern world economy, which cannot be fitted into the pattern of arbitrary national boundaries, often leads to conflicts between national states. Religious institutions may become obstructions to certain desirable reforms because of a rigid adherence to the belief that they possess the final, fundamental source of truth. This variation in the speeds with which institutions develop may even result in contradictions between fundamental principles. Thus we find the modern ideal of national patriotism frequently colliding with the Christian ideal of universal brotherhood.

This brief discussion of problems related to institutional change will perhaps suggest the vital roles which institutions play in modern civilization. It hardly needs to be added that (there has never been and never will be a society in which man's wisdom has sufficed to preserve a perfect adjustment between institutions and social and individual needs.) It is obvious, too, that institutional changes can never offer a remedy for numerous personal maladjustments to the social order. Even though institutional forms may be adjusted to one another and to the needs of the people as a whole, individual men and women constantly experience problems in adjusting themselves within concrete groups which are molded to the institutional pattern. It should be added, however, that the number and severity of such personal problems will be increased whenever institutional forms are not satisfactory. In fact, the presence of large numbers of personal problems of adjustment may well indicate that institutional forms are not properly geared to social needs.

### FIVE MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL FIELDS

A rather obvious conclusion to be drawn from the materials of this chapter is that (social organizations and institutions can be justly evaluated only on the basis of their adequacy in meeting the needs of their own time.) Institutions that suffice in

one culture may be utterly inadequate in another, or in the same culture at a later period in its development. We shall be made more definitely aware of this fact in the chapters ahead, where the institutional development is examined over long periods of time. When the social pattern of life is simple, institutions are generalized. That is to say, a single institution may perform several functions. The family, for example, in certain periods of its history, performed not only such functions as we associate with it today; it performed political, economic, religious, judicial, and educational functions as well. But as civilizations become increasingly complex, the services demanded require specialization, and specialized social mechanisms or institutions develop to supply them. Hence in the highly complex civilizations of today we find it desirable for clearness of thought to distinguish between *institutional fields* and the numerous *specialized institutions* within each field.

The five fields of institutional organization treated in the remaining chapters of this book do not include all the institutions found in Western civilization, nor do they cover all the activities important in the life of man; they do embrace the major organized activities of society—the economic, the political, the religious, the domestic, and the educational.

The term "institutional field" refers to the whole web of social organizations devoted to the satisfaction of some major need or needs. For example, the economic institutional field includes all those varied social organizations and mechanisms more or less articulated which have as their main purpose the providing of material goods—food, clothing, shelter, luxuries. The main social organizations within the field are themselves institutions, specialized institutions, which, as the name implies, are distinguished by the performance of some specialized function contributing to the basic purpose of the institutional field. Thus the factory is a specialized economic institution performing the function of transforming raw materials into finished products; the store is another having to do with the exchange or distribution of economic goods; and the bank is a third having the special function of providing money or

credit to facilitate the operation of the factory or store. One might mention numerous other social mechanisms which enter into the complicated machinery of modern economic life. Similarly the political, the religious, the domestic, and the educational institutional field comprises specialized institutions, each making its particular contribution toward the accomplishment of the basic purpose of the institutional field to which it belongs.

Each of these institutional fields has a separate basic function to perform for society, but it must not be inferred from this characterization that each field therefore stands apart from other fields. Moreover, each specialized institution makes its special contribution to the basic function of the field to which it belongs, but it does not stand apart from other specialized institutions. The fact is that both institutional fields and specialized institutions are more or less interrelated parts of the vast machinery of the state-society and to a degree of the world-society. No institution is able to isolate its own activity. The interdependence of the specialized institutions in the economic field is too obvious to need illustration. It is obvious, too, that political, religious, domestic, and educational institutions all have economic necessities which make economic interests and activities an indispensable adjunct of their operation. The state extends its supreme power over all institutions. Not only are all subject to regulation at the hands of government, but all depend largely upon the state for protection and in some cases for their very existence. In many cases these interrelationships do not stop within the frontiers of the nation; they may extend to other nations over the whole globe. This characteristic interdependence of institutions gives to modern civilization an exceedingly complex social pattern that complicates greatly the problems of modern life. This fact will become clear as we proceed with a more detailed examination of our institutional development.



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## ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION AND INSTITUTIONS BEFORE MODERN TIMES

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**T**HERE IS NO MORE insistent demand on man than that of maintaining physical life. The needs of primitive man emphasized the importance of food; the material wants of modern man are more extensive and elaborate, but they are no less insistent. The life of primitive man was a struggle, a struggle for food; the life of contemporary man is similarly a struggle, a struggle to maintain a standard of existence in keeping with the demands of the complex society in which he lives. Thus from the very nature of things, the satisfaction of material needs is and always has been a cardinal problem in human society. An exceedingly large part of human activity, for the great majority of men and for all major social institutions, is found, when accurately appraised, to be in some degree related directly or indirectly to the accomplishment of this paramount task. Those activities and institutions which primarily and directly contribute to its accomplishment are termed economic. It is the development of economic life from its beginnings to the present that now calls for consideration, our ultimate aim being to understand and evaluate modern economic life by contrasting it with what has gone before and by observing those currents out of the past that continue to influence our world today.

Economics has been defined as that social science which ex-

amines the processes involved in meeting the wants of men for food, clothing, shelter, and luxuries. On the one hand are almost unlimited human desires; on the other are the means of partially meeting those desires; that is to say, the agents of production—land, labor, and capital. In a broad and fundamental sense, economic activity consists in utilizing these agents of production in such a fashion as to satisfy the variety of human needs. Thus the end of the economic process is consumption; we produce to consume.

### **Endless change characteristic of economic life**

Though economic life has necessarily always centered around the production of food and goods and their subsequent consumption, the particular economic customs, organizations, and institutions of our own times are, like all other aspects of human culture, a product of historical development; they have grown through the ages into what they are now. It is easy, however, for us to take them for granted, to forget that our present economic arrangements—private ownership of property, freedom of enterprise, machine technique, money and credit, freedom of choice of occupations, specialization—did not always exist, and even to assume that because they are now they always will be. But one of the great lessons of economic history is that industrial relations and institutions have undergone constant change. We have no sufficient reason to believe that they will not undergo fundamental modifications in the future. There is really nothing necessarily fixed or permanent in the present economic order. Perhaps the most effective way to impress this fact is to examine the character of economic development during the whole historical period.

The history of culture reveals six rather distinct and basic types of economy: (1) the collectional economy, (2) the nomadic economy, (3) the village economy, (4) the town economy, (5) the national economy, and (6) the world economy.<sup>1</sup> The justification for this rather arbitrary division is the fact

<sup>1</sup>In discussing the first four topics of this classification the author has followed the general line of thought presented in Professor N. S. B. Gras's excellent little work, *An Introduction to Economic History* (Harper and Brothers, 1922). The discussion of the last two topics follows the more conventional view.



that each form presents special characteristics that distinguish it from other forms, though it is also true that there is much that is common to all of them. The purpose here is not to give a detailed picture of each form, but rather to mention those attributes that distinguish one from another. For the sake of convenience we shall speak of the types of economy as stages in economic development; but it is to be understood that we have no adequate evidence for the assumption that every community, during its historical advance to existing economic forms, has necessarily passed through these "stages" in the order named, or that any given community has necessarily passed through all of them in the course of its history. What we do know is that history discloses abundant examples of each of these types of economy, except the last—world economy—which belongs only to modern times. With this caution in mind we may proceed to a consideration of the first stage.

### THE COLLECTIONAL ECONOMY

The simplest and most primitive form of economic life is that in which man is essentially a nonproducer of economic wealth. He relies wholly on the generosity of nature for subsistence. What nature gratuitously provides he more or less passively takes for himself. If foods are available, he eats; if not available, he starves. As yet it has not dawned on him to make careful provisions for the future—to save enough of today's surplus for the next day or the next year. Nor has he the technical knowledge necessary to do so. If one collects enough berries to satiate his present hunger, he is wealthy; but in a few hours he is once more in poverty should the available supply have been exhausted. Under such an existence it is the present that is vital, not the future.

#### Collectional economy among backward peoples

Chronologically, this stage appears before the dawn of recorded time; in all probability, the men of the early Stone Age lived under a collectional economy. But it still exists among some of the so-called primitive peoples who have thus far de-

veloped no mechanical ingenuity. The Tasmanians, now extinct—the last dying in 1876—depended for a livelihood on hunting and collecting. Their only weapon was a pointed spear made of hard wood. The only clothes they knew were opossum-skin cloaks. Most of their time was spent searching for food. While the women and children dug for roots and searched for berries, the men were chasing the kangaroo or combing woods for opossums. Every form of animal food was eaten; even frogs, snakes, lizards, and snails went into the pot.

Before their contact with the white man the Bushmen of South Africa lived under a collectional economy. They were nomadic hunters, knowing nothing of the domestication of animals or of agriculture. They caught small animals, grasshoppers, snakes, insects, larvae, and fish for food. They also gathered wild melons, grass seed, berries, and other fruits. They liked honey and obtained it by smoking the bees from their hives. The Bushmen often killed the cattle of their Hottentot, Bantu, and white neighbors. They took little thought for the morrow. They would make a kill, devour the food on the spot, settle down to sleep off the effects, starve for a few days, and set off again in search of game.

Despite the rudeness of life under a collectional economy, it is to be noted that the practice of division of labor has already begun. It is illustrated by a very simple division under which men hunt and fish while women collect berries and dig yams or roots. The men do the fighting while the women care for the young. It is a division of employment in which each sex assumes, more or less, the responsibilities for which it is especially suited. In some of the more advanced groups there is actually a division of labor among members of the same sex; one man makes arrows and another medicine. Further, some groups specialize in the collection of one commodity, which is exchanged for the commodity of another group; thus fish might be exchanged for skins and game. This characteristic of a simple division of labor is pointed out as indicative of the fact that no one stage is absolutely and completely different from a succeeding one. What exists today has its roots in the

past, even though the primitive traces seem so far removed as to bear apparently not even a superficial resemblance to our present complex manner of living.

### **The limitations of collectional economy**

The limitations of a collectional economy become apparent when we analyze it in terms of later developments in economic life. There was little social stability under a collectional economy. Most of the time man was on the move in the perpetual quest for food. Whenever climatic conditions or serious weather changes reduced the natural food supply, or food in a given area became scarce by reason of the demands upon it, there was nothing for man to do but to move on. There was no need of conserving land space, for the population was sparse in early periods, while land areas were practically unlimited. Until man should learn to supplement the wild products of nature through cultivation of the land his subsistence would have to be gathered over wide areas, and a permanent, settled life would be impossible. Absence of agriculture is, then, an essential characteristic of a collectional economy.

Collectional economy is remote from our modern ways. Even so, we still depend for the gratification of many wants on the process of collecting or appropriating the gifts of nature. This is evidenced by such occupations as mining, lumbering, and fishing. But while these occupations depend fundamentally on what nature has stored up over the years, we are able, with our fund of knowledge and the use of the machine processes, to avail ourselves of these goods in greater quantities and with more certainty than were the peoples of earlier days.

## **THE NOMADIC ECONOMY**

### **Distinguishing characteristics**

Specifically, what marks off the nomadic stage from the collectional is the cultivation of plants, the domestication of animals, and the use of tools. Man has become painfully con-



scious of the vagaries of nature. The demand for food, clothing, and shelter is constant, but the uncontrolled environment is not to be depended on for the gratification of these wants. It becomes necessary to control the external forces—a control which becomes increasingly possible only as knowledge increases and tools and equipment are acquired. Division of labor becomes more complicated: women and boys cultivate; men engage in simple manufacture, warfare, and hunting. The division of labor becomes further complicated by the introduction of slavery through conquests of other nomads.

But although man now cultivates plants and animals, and although he uses tools, it must not be supposed that the habits and methods of the collectional stage are altogether abandoned. More accurately, cultivation supplements the methods of the preceding existence. Life still depends largely on the direct gifts of nature. Except for cultivation—which is a difference of kind—the nomadic stage differs from the collectional only in degree. Man still continues to wander, though less than before. He may wander from necessity, since he has not yet altogether learned to secure from any given area a year-in, year-out supply of food; or from fear, as when his habitation is threatened by invasion from a neighboring group; or, conceivably, from sheer restlessness and desire for exploration.

#### **Social advance under nomadic economy**

We can appreciate the advantages of the nomadic over the collectional economy. With the acquisition of tools, the cultivation of plants, and the domestication of animals, man ceased to be a mere collector—he became a producer. The time and effort spent in making tools and in cultivating the soil and raising domestic animals yielded no immediate returns, but ultimately they made possible a greater output in return for the deferred satisfaction of the moment. This is a fact of primary importance. Man was now able to make provision for the future. The value of making provision for the future was recognized to some extent in the collectional stage whenever food was held over for later consumption.

But this process did not increase the future wealth of the community, except by the amount of consumable products held over for the next period. Under the nomadic economy this process of saving took on a new social significance. With the cultivation of land and the use of domestic animals another type of saving is practiced, a saving which takes on the form of what is called producers' capital. The importance of this change cannot be overestimated, for it is the basis of our modern economic system. It means that men utilize their available labor and land for the creation of producers' rather than consumers' goods, with the realization that these producers' goods, which yield no immediate satisfaction, will ultimately help produce a surplus of consumers' goods. Thus men devote their energies to the creation of tools with an eye to their future uses in production.

The advance indicated here signified that man had acquired a greater control over his economic environment than he had had in the earlier stage. But he still had much to fear, for he had not yet learned how to get from a given area an assured and continuous production. So long as he remained in a nomadic state he was subject to serious limitations on his cultural progress. He was compelled to give considerable time and effort to the periodic moving of his habitation; nothing more than the most superficial agricultural development was possible. Hence, when man learned how to settle down permanently on one spot he entered a more advanced state of economic life.

It is obvious that nomadic economy belongs to a relatively simple form of society. We found evidence of this type of economic organization in Neolithic times. Neolithic man cultivated plants—wheat, barley, millet, peas, fruits; he domesticated animals—swine, goats, sheep, cattle, camels; he used tools—the plow, the sickle, and the mill for grinding. It was on the material foundations of this economy that he built a culture further advanced than the culture of Paleolithic times. Many of the Semitic tribes that swarmed out of Arabia in the prehistoric period continued for centuries to subsist on the products of a scanty agriculture and the increase

of their flocks and herds which they drove from pasture to pasture as the seasons changed.

### THE VILLAGE ECONOMY

When man learned how to satisfy his essential material needs within the limits of a fixed area, he ceased to wander and entered the stage designated as a settled village economy.

As we shall use the term here, "village" does not mean a collection of houses; we use the word to designate a social unit with a definite territorial area whose primary purpose is economic production, and whose outstanding characteristic is a high degree of self-sufficiency. For present purposes we should think of a village as a group of people in conjunction with a definite territorial area, who depend for their subsistence not on articles of trade but on the things which they themselves produce. These, then, are the three tests of a village economy: (1) a social unit, (2) a definite territorial area, (3) self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup>

The ability of a community to subsist permanently and more or less independently in one place presupposes a fairly productive soil and the development of a technology more advanced than that found in the nomadic stage. Agriculture now becomes of major importance; previously the work of women and menials, tillage now takes on a greater dignity and becomes the work of men. Cultivation is still extensive, but it is extensive over a given area; and in comparison with that of the nomadic stage it might be described as intensive, for extensive and intensive are relative terms. Less stress is put on the raising of domestic animals and more on plant cultivation, now that a given area is a permanent home. It becomes clear that the soil must be cared for, since its exhaustion presages extermination for the village group. So we find that lands are either carefully irrigated or permitted to lie fallow to renew their original fertility. With these developments it becomes possible for population to increase, since the available food supply is now sufficient for greater numbers. The prac-

<sup>1</sup>Professor Gras believes that this third aspect of village economy has been overemphasized. See his *Introduction to Economic History*, pp. 80-81.



tice of storing food is more common than with the nomads, since it is possible to build permanent granaries in the villages. And of course more time is devoted to the creation of tools and equipment—essentially a process of saving, as has already been indicated. Manufacturing is more important than previously; man can now enjoy a greater quantity and variety of commodities. Division of labor is more detailed; now there are carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, and astrologers. All in all, society assumes an aspect of stability and permanence not present during the earlier stages of economic development.

### **Prevalence of village economy throughout history**

Here and there over the globe settled village economy has flourished during the whole period of history: it was widespread in the ancient Near East; it was the characteristic form of economic organization among the early Greeks and the early Romans; it was basic in the life of medieval society during the first several centuries; and it continued to be an important feature of modern civilization down to the Industrial Revolution. Even now, in isolated districts over the earth, and particularly in considerable parts of Asia and Africa, a village economy continues to serve the needs of great numbers of people.<sup>1</sup> For our present purposes we need not pause to examine the character of the village economy during ancient times. Far more important to us is a consideration of this aspect of economic life in the Middle Ages, for, in a sense, the economic foundations of modern civilization were laid down during the Middle Ages.

### **VILLAGE ECONOMY IN THE MIDDLE AGES**

To get a general picture of economic life in the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages, let us imagine ourselves back in the European world of the ninth century. As we travel over Europe we are impressed with the sparsity of population: wide areas are uncultivated, and forest and swamp lands abound.

<sup>1</sup>A classic example of a people in transition from the nomadic to the settled village economy is afforded by numbers of the Arabs who are abandoning their tents for houses.

We are impressed, too, with the lack of highways and bridges, and the difficulties of travel generally, once we leave the seas and the rivers behind us. As we proceed, we come upon village after village, but rarely a town; the impressive fact is agriculture; there seems to be no other sort of economic activity. Everywhere, too, the villages look much the same—a church, possibly a monastery, and a castle or a less imposing baronial hall stand out sharply. Grouped about them or near them stand the miserable huts of the tillers of the soil, huts huddled together with hardly more than a garden patch to separate them. Farther out lie the farm lands. Here we see fields curiously laid out in long, narrow strips—"open" fields, not enclosed by fences, but separated by rows of stones or by unplowed ridges of earth that furnish a narrow footpath between the strips. Here and there are patches of woodland or meadow or waste. We look in vain for laborsaving implements of the modern type; we see only those rudely constructed implements of a primitive age which demand of laborers a maximum of toil.

Such were the physical aspects of the typical agricultural villages that stretched over almost all of Europe. Town life was rare before the tenth century. Only here and there where the bishop of the Church had preserved the town as an administrative center, or where exceptional opportunities for trade had created some semblance of a town community, were there any deviations from the village type; and even in these cases towns were hardly more than overgrown villages. By and large, this was the period when European society was thrust back from the rich urban life that characterized Roman civilization to a state in which the village economy dominated society. The high churchmen and the noble or knight who ruled and fought were almost the only ones who did not actually till the soil to feed the mouths of the population. The village, which so universally formed a part of the European landscape, was the economic unit of medieval society. It was known as the manor or the *ville*; the term "manorial system" is used generally to designate the peculiar economic organization which characterized the period.

### The manorial system

The complete historical development of the manorial system does not lie within the medieval period. In its main outlines it was a heritage from the Romans, who in turn had taken the idea from the Near East. It will be remembered that the controlling center of the Roman estates was the villa, where the Roman master of the land resided; that the land was tilled by slaves subject to the control of the master, who was held responsible to the Roman government for their good behavior; and that the estate was organized as an economic unit for the support of all who lived under the master's authority. In these several particulars the medieval manor resembled the Roman estate.

First and always the medieval village or manor was organized essentially as a self-contained community; that is, it was able to furnish within itself, with a minimum of aid from outside, all that was necessary for the subsistence of the group. It was compelled to be self-sufficient. Cut off in large measure from the outside world, the community had no choice; it had to maintain its own physical existence or perish. It produced, not for profits, but that it might eat and live; and consequently it usually produced no more, and could produce no more, than sufficed to support life. Such being the object, it organized its community life, the best it knew how, to achieve that end. Trade was not nonexistent, however; slight as it was, it served to introduce a limited use of money into medieval village economy.<sup>1</sup>

An ordinary American or European village of the present time offers a striking contrast in its economic organization. Modern methods of communication and transportation make it unnecessary for it to be self-sufficing. It is not an economic unit; it does depend on the outside world; it can draw on the farthest ends of the earth to supply its wants. To supply those wants it must have commodities to exchange, and it ob-

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<sup>1</sup>Recent studies of this period indicate that intercommunity trade existed on a much larger scale than earlier authorities believed. See Alfons Dopsch, *The Economic and Social Foundations of European Civilization*, Chap. II.

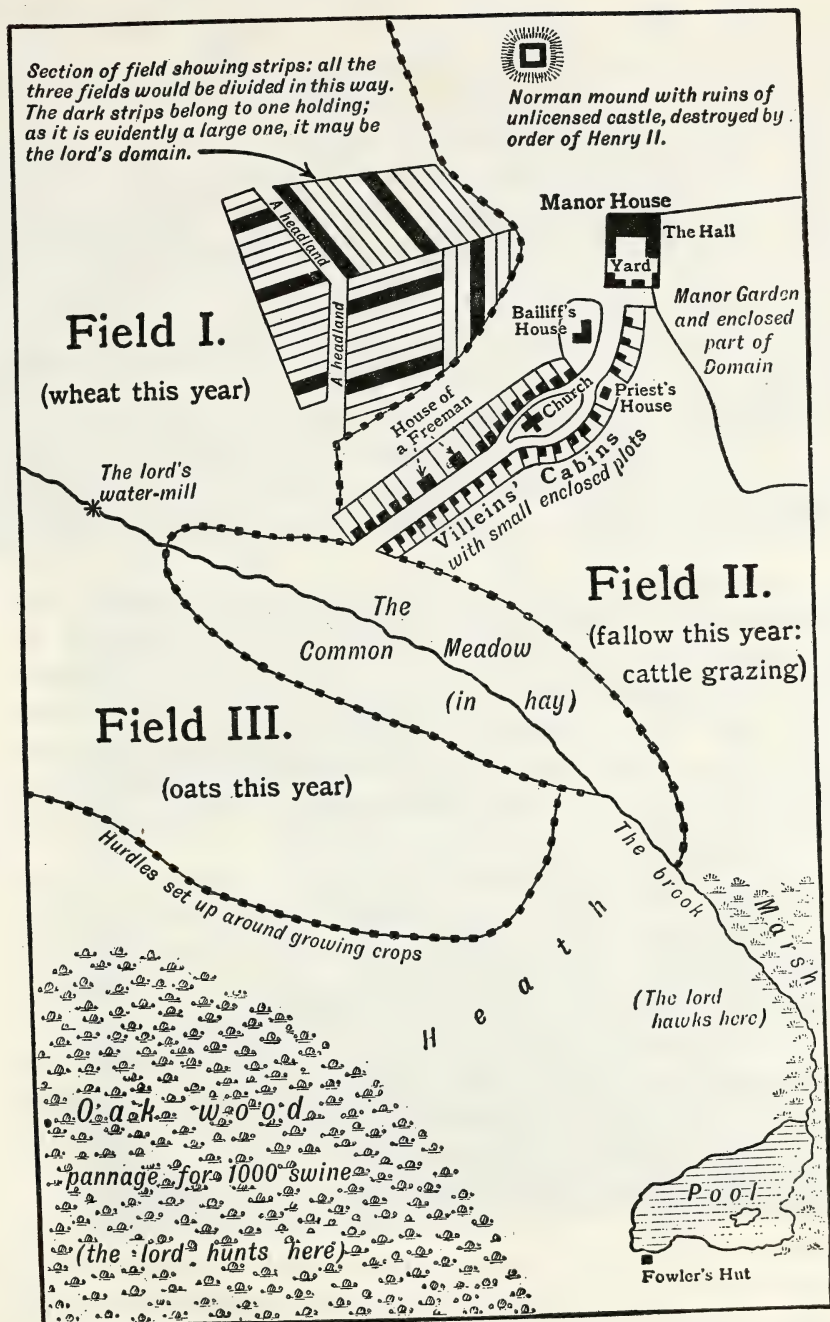


tains such commodities by producing a surplus which it sells for money with which to purchase what it needs from the outside world. Thus the modern farmer produces for a profit and not merely for direct consumption.

### The agricultural laborers

The status of the medieval cultivator was likewise strikingly different. He was in most cases a serf. At the head of the manor or ville stood a lord, lay or ecclesiastical, or a simple knight. Since a lord usually possessed many manors, his representative or agent frequently occupied the position of local authority. But to some authority, whether that of a great noble occupying a castle or one of lesser importance occupying a manor house, the serf owed obedience. It was from this authority that the serf held his land. And he held it only for use; he did not own it in the modern sense. He was attached to the land; when it was transferred to another lord, he, like a tree or a building, went with the land. He might not leave his holding if he desired; if he ran away he could be brought back and punished. The food which he produced belonged to him only in part; part of it he must give to his lord. Nor did his labor belong wholly to himself; part of it, usually about three days in the week, he must give to the cultivating of the master's lands—the *demesne*; and in times of need, as in harvest time, even more of his labor might be exacted. He might also be called upon to build roads or bridges, or to perform other services. He used the lord's mill to grind his grain, the lord's oven to bake his bread, the lord's wine press to make his wine; and for all these services he must pay a fee. On certain occasions he was compelled to make still other payments to the lord, sometimes in kind, sometimes in money. For his contributions and services he received the land on which he subsisted and, theoretically at least, protection.

All this looks much like slavery, but the serf was not a slave. There were limits to what a lord might demand or do, limits fixed by the customs of the manor. He was not permitted to buy or sell a serf. He might not dispossess the serf of his lands except for a recognized cause. Servile obligations were



14. AN IMAGINARY ENGLISH VILLAGE UNDER THE MANORIAL SYSTEM (FROM G. M. TREVELYAN, *HISTORY OF ENGLAND*, COURTESY OF LONGMANS GREEN AND COMPANY, LTD., LONDON)

numerous, but they could not be arbitrarily imposed by the lord or increased or made more severe; they were controlled by custom, though complaints were numerous indicating that custom was sometimes overridden. And, finally, the serf possessed a legal status, which slaves ordinarily do not; he had resort to the manorial courts in the case of certain grievances.

### **Agricultural methods**

The compelling power of custom exhibited itself in numerous other ways. The serf was not an individual cultivator; as we have seen, there was little play for individualism in medieval society. The conception of the manorial group was communal; each member was an integral part of the whole. The community was a closely integrated, coöperative unit, in which each member was consigned to a status which carried with it certain customary obligations; a status to which each was born and from which there were very few avenues of escape. Thus the serf's activity was ordered in advance. What he should plant, when, and how; when he should harvest and how; the amount of wood which he might take from the common woodland; the number of animals he might put on the common pasture—all these were matters determined by the customs of the manor.

The distribution of the land and its use were in keeping with this communal conception; individual farming would have been out of the question. The distribution scheme is designated as the "open-field" system and the "two-field" or "three-field" system. A description of the three-field system will serve to make the typical arrangement clear. Under this system, the tillable land was divided into three great, irregularly shaped fields. As a means of preserving the fertility of the soil, each of the three fields was permitted to lie fallow one year out of every three years. Of the two fields cultivated in a given year, one was sown in the spring, commonly with oats, barley, and peas, to be harvested in the autumn; while the second was planted to rye and wheat, to be harvested the following summer. Judged by modern standards, the variety of crops was exceedingly small and the yield light. Each of the great fields

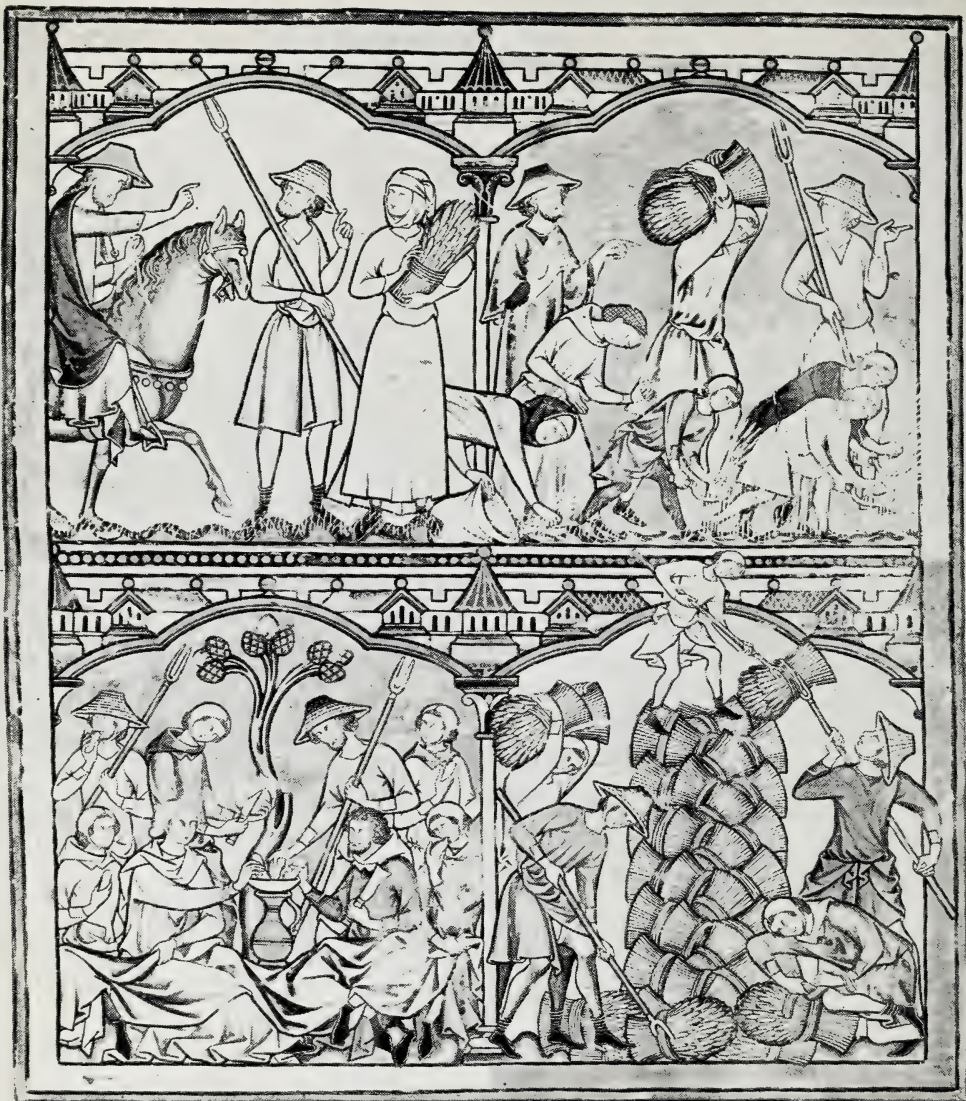




The ramparts of only a few of the walled cities of the Middle Ages remain intact, among them Carcassonne (top) and Aiguesmortes (bottom) in France. The Romans began the walls of Carcassonne in the fifth century. Later the Visigoths continued the construction, and during subsequent centuries many changes and enlargements were made. The fortifications consist of two walls separated by a wide ditch. Surmounted by fifty-two towers, these walls of great thickness made the town impregnable from attack. (Courtesy French Government Tourist Bureau.) Aiguesmortes was built in the thirteenth century by Saint Louis to defend his seaport on the Mediterranean. The mile-long wall around this city is about twenty-three feet high, with fifteen surmounting towers. (Courtesy French Tourist Office.)



**V**aliter Ruth pueritiae sacra vadit ad colligendum spicas et casti ingressa ē agrum domini  
 cuiusdam nomine Booz qui erat a suis sociis. Ille autem veniens ad iugum cum iudith Ruth  
 inter messorum audito unde esset et que esset precepit messoribus ut p omnia bene tractarent eam sibi  
 etiam sapiens ne alio preter.

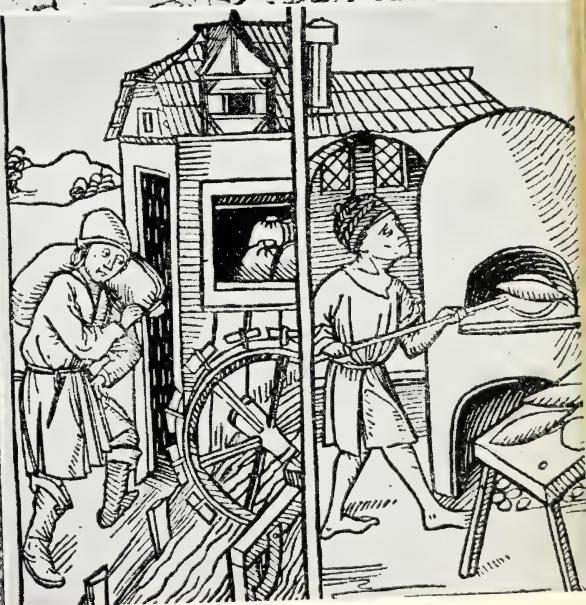
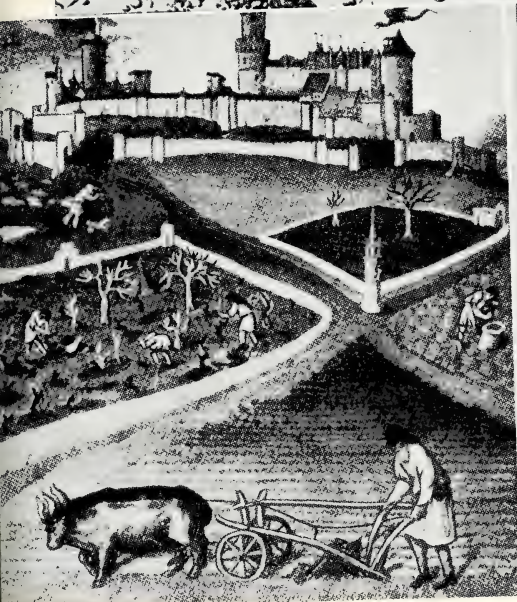


**V**aliter comedentibus messoribus Ruth  
 cum eis comedit sicut Booz ipse precepit.

**V**aliter messoribus manipulos concutunt  
 Ruth quod libere cenare possente colle  
 giat secum auferit.

Life on a manor is pictured on this page from an illuminated manuscript of the thirteenth century. Although the artist who did it was illustrating the Biblical story of Ruth, he took his subjects from his own environment, and portrayed the activities and the dress of medieval people. The pictures show the lord of the manor giving directions for the work to be done; the serfs reaping grain, having their noon meal, and stacking sheaves. The original of this picture is beautifully colored in blue, yellow, red, and pure gold. The pigments have not faded, despite their age of nearly seven hundred years. (Courtesy of The Pierpont Morgan Library.)





The illustration at the top is a French miniature of the fifteenth century showing artisans at work building a bridge and being defended from the attack of an opposing force. The picture illustrates very clearly some of the craft tools used by the workmen of that time. At the lower left is another French miniature picturing several agricultural pursuits going on outside the walls of a manorial castle—tending sheep, pruning vines, plowing, and planting. The German woodcut at the lower right illustrates grinding grain at a water-powered mill and baking bread in a characteristic outdoor oven.





Among the important relics of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance are the guild houses and other occupational buildings of the towns and cities. In the picture at the top are shown three of these buildings in Ghent, Belgium—the storage depot (12th century), the grain weighers' house and the watermen's house (both 16th century). In the picture at the lower left is shown the old crane gate of the Hanseatic city of Danzig. This gate was a part of the city's fortifications and afforded entrance to the city from the harbor. The crane was used to unload ships, and their cargoes were stored in the building. (Courtesy German Railroads Information Office.) The picture at the lower right is a reproduction of a miniature by Jean Le Tavernier (1460), showing shops at the city walls. A jeweler conducts his business within the gate; a seamstress sits just outside; and two other merchants have their stands at the right.

was divided into long narrow strips that stretched like ribbons over the land. Each serf was allotted a definite amount of land; but each holding was made up of a certain number of "open" or unenclosed strips in each of the three great fields, with the result that the serf's "farm" was widely scattered over the manor. This odd method of distribution apparently effected a fairly equitable apportionment among areas of the good, the less fruitful, and the poor land. At the same time, the wide scattering and the intermingling of strips made it necessary and practical to farm coöperatively; services were exchanged, and the few existing farm implements were used more or less in common. A conception of farming as a scientific and individual enterprise requiring experimentation and careful calculation for the future was unknown.

#### **The limitations of the village economy**

The disadvantages of the village economy are revealed in the preceding description of the manorial system. Viewed through modern eyes, it helps us to comprehend the relative stagnation of medieval society. Man was, more or less, a creature of a fixed routine. The result was the perpetuation of wasteful methods, and consequent poverty. Manorial life was exceedingly simple; it lacked the complexity of our present elaborate arrangements for producing and distributing goods. But, obviously, this simplicity was the very reason for its poverty. If in the present day we were to revert to the simple rural life, abandon our specialization, produce only for direct wants—in other words, become an assemblage of self-sufficient communities instead of interdependent units—we should thereby reduce ourselves to comparative poverty. The self-sufficient community is, from the economic standpoint, highly inefficient; by all their laborious efforts and endless toil the serfs could barely provide the most meager subsistence. So far did the lack of adequate transport facilities bind their economic fortunes to a limited locality that in times of local distress due to failure of crops they were often in no position to draw upon the surplus of more favored regions.

Added to the disadvantages of the system was the incubus



of war. Among the medieval nobles, never held adequately in check by any higher authority, war was a chronic condition. Thus society was constantly still further impoverishing itself, constantly using up the resources of the land to ward off the enemy. What might have been economically utilized to provide necessities, and perhaps the comforts of life, was too often directed to the prosecution of war.

Viewed from the vantage point of our own times, the village economy looks hopelessly inadequate. Evaluated in its own social setting it appears quite otherwise. It probably met the simple demands of those who lived under it as well as our economy meets the demands of modern man. With all of its limitations its relative adequacy is attested by its persistence over centuries of time and its wide prevalence in history. It became unsatisfactory and disappeared only when changes in its geographical and cultural setting made possible the next advance. Whenever and wherever such changes occurred, a town economy emerged.

### THE TOWN ECONOMY

Under the types of economy thus far described a dominant characteristic of life has been self-sufficiency; that is, independence from other groups for the essential needs of subsistence. The slight trade that existed was incidental to the main activities. Specialization was limited, and exchange between different units took place only to a minor degree. Where trade was sufficient to make one necessary, the village had a marketplace. Exchange was simple and took place largely among members of the same community. When we speak of the next stage, the town economy, we have in mind an existence in which trading itself is a major occupation, in which men do not merely produce in the physical sense, but act as exchangers—buy and sell at a profit. Thus the characteristic of the town, in the present sense, is trade outside its own limits.

In a town economy the town commonly becomes the center of a web of commercial activity with a radius of ten to twenty miles. The outlying villages within the circle supplement the



economic life of the town, and the town supplements the economic life of the villages, but the villages are dominated by the town. A specialized group of traders or some of the villagers themselves carry the produce of the land or other raw materials to the town, while the surplus of the manufactured goods of the town finds markets in the villages. Thus the economic life over a considerable territorial area becomes integrated; town and villages become to a degree interdependent, and a new economic unit emerges—a town economy. When towns are advantageously situated on the sea or on important rivers, trade becomes more extensive and varied, and the town comes to dominate the villages within a wider radius of influence. In some cases the radius of commercial activity might extend far beyond the territory under the immediate political control of the dominant town or city.

#### **Town economy an indication of social advance**

The development of a town economy signalizes an advance in several particulars. Industry now takes its place beside agriculture as a specialized form of economic activity, and highly skilled craftsmen in many lines of industry appear as an important group in society. With the development of industry, commerce advances to a position of major importance; goods are exchanged over a wider area, with the result that the advantages of geographic specialization are afforded. The division of labor is carried a step further. Men devoted exclusively to trade come into prominence. By the entry of a specialized group of traders into the productive process the efficiency of the economic system is further increased, and consequently production increases. A town economy also affects the growth of population. A given area constituting a town can support a considerably larger population than a village. In the first place, trade, by its very nature, does not require extensive landholdings; and, secondly, trade results in such an increase in production that a given area can now economically support more people.

With town economy there comes another important feature of economic life—the extensive use of money. As production

increases, as more wealth accumulates, private property becomes a more important institution. Private property hitherto has been mainly in land; now articles of trade also constitute private property. And since trade is complicated, it becomes necessary to have a medium of exchange—namely, money—to carry it on. In the town economy money assumes great importance, whereas prior to this time it was only an occasional manifestation. The change gradually produces a demand for greater facilities in the financing of business enterprises and trade. The result is the gradual development of banking as one of the indispensable institutions in the economic world. In general, the growing importance of money has its social consequences in another sense. The possession of land continues to be the basis of high social status, but with the accumulation of industrial wealth and the wealth of commerce the leading merchants come to occupy a high and influential position in society. The various economic forces working together create the material foundations for a more richly endowed urban civilization.

Since trade must necessarily be carried on for profit, and since the acquisition of profit requires great ingenuity, the old traditional procedure of the village must give way. The exercise of individual judgment and the discovery of new methods are more important than a thoughtless imitation of the past. In the self-sufficient community, men live by merely repeating the age-worn methods of cultivation; but in the towns, business judgment is required to insure that goods be sold at a price higher than their cost. Individuality therefore plays a more important part in the town economy.

The town economy belongs to the historical period. We have seen how settled village life began before the close of the Neolithic Age, but prehistoric peoples did not go beyond that stage. In the ancient Near East, however, we noticed how villages favorably situated grew into towns and towns grew into flourishing cities. Most of them represent town economies. They supplied the industrial wants of the surrounding country and in turn received food and raw materials from the rural sections. Some of the larger and richer cities ex-

tended their economic activity beyond the ordinary limits of a town economy through more extensive trade. The Phoenician cities, for example, supplied some of their wants from distant sources through the establishment of commercial colonies throughout the Mediterranean area. The growth from the village economy in early Greek times to the town economies of the Greek city-states and a similar development in ancient Italy have also been observed. Of greater importance to us at present are the towns of the Middle Ages, many of which have an unbroken history down to our own day. These we wish to examine in greater detail.

### TOWNS AND TOWN ECONOMY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, town life, which is in part distinguished by its devotion to industry and trade as contrasted with agriculture, was of rare occurrence in the Middle Ages until the tenth or eleventh century. In the earlier centuries the great bulk of manufacturing was, therefore, carried on in the village or manor. And so simple and meager were the needs of the agricultural worker and his family that it required no great skill to supply most of them within the home. Spinning, weaving, and knitting were common occupations of the housewife and her daughters—in addition to many other tasks incidental to rural life—and even noble ladies busied themselves with fine needlework. To furnish those articles which could not be produced on the manor there appeared occasionally a trader or an itinerant peddler. Otherwise, economic contact with the outside world was narrowly limited.

It is evident, then, that the industrial arts were incidental in this period. The manorial dweller was first and last a tiller of the soil; what else he did to meet his physical wants was incidental and subordinate. Yet there were a few specialists on the manor. A certain amount of ironwork, for example, was a necessity; someone must acquire the skill to use the forge and the mechanic's tools. The village miller was likewise indispensable. But, on the whole, specialization was not a char-



acteristic of manorial economy. It is hardly necessary to add that the limited amount of industry that went on in the village was executed entirely with hand tools; that is to say, it was a handicraft industry. The emergence of town life in the eleventh century signalized the beginning of a new phase in the development of medieval industry and trade.

### Medieval towns

For the most part medieval towns bore little resemblance to our modern towns and cities. So far as size is concerned, we should still call most of them villages. For purposes of protection they were surrounded by walls. As they grew, available space became limited and buildings became crowded; the streets were little more than crooked lanes which usually became filthy with decaying matter, since sanitary facilities were almost nonexistent. With growing wealth, however, came the addition of stately churches, town halls, guild houses, towers, gateways, public squares utilized as market places—all lending some justification for the pride that the burghers felt for their towns, often described by them as beautiful.

For a time the position of the towns in medieval society was not much different from that of the villages. Like the villages, they were under the authority of some king, nobleman, bishop, or abbot who exacted certain dues or tolls from the inhabitants. As industry and trade developed, the economic interests of the town dwellers diverged ever more widely from those of the agricultural communities about them. With the change the desire grew to limit or throw off the authority of the manorial lords. This movement for town liberties opened a long and interesting struggle from which the more important towns emerged with varying degrees of exemptions and privileges set down in successive charters granted by the kings, noblemen, or ecclesiastics upon whose territory the towns happened to be. The development is important in economic history, for it led ultimately to the complete political independence of some towns and a large measure of autonomy in others. It was this special authority to manage their own affairs that set the towns off politically from the rural com-

munities and gave them either complete or, at least, extensive control in the ordering of their economic life.

The life of the towns was richer and more varied by far than that which had characterized the medieval manor. Trade and industry became specialized; production increased, and skilled crafts multiplied. The towns became the center of a more advanced type of economic organization, through which neighboring villages and smaller towns were drawn into new relationships. The town became both a market for the products of the surrounding rural communities and a means of supplying manufactured goods of a kind that could not be produced on the manors. In addition, a limited trade sprang up between towns, but, for the most part, the great bulk of manufactured goods was for local consumption. Far more extensive, however, was the trade of the great towns and cities of Italy and The Netherlands and of the more important towns of some other areas. In the case of the Italian cities, particularly Venice, a profitable trade in the products of the East became a practical monopoly and was pursued on a scale, for those times, of imposing proportions.

### Medieval guilds

This more complicated pattern of economic life presupposes new economic and social interests, new economic practices, and new forms of economic organization. The townsmen turned to a form of organization called a guild. Guilds performed a number of social purposes in the Middle Ages. Our interest is confined to those that were devoted essentially to economic ends—the merchant guilds and the craft guilds.

The merchant guilds had reached a position of importance as early as the eleventh century. Every town of any importance had its merchant guild. It included all townsmen who were engaged in the selling of goods. Not all these were "merchants" in the present-day sense. With the exception of a limited number who confined their activity to the buying and selling of raw materials, most of the guild members were manufacturers who sold the goods they made. These commercial activities entered so extensively into the life of the

town that the great majority of the townsmen became members of the guild; it was almost an all-inclusive organization.

The functions of the guild were numerous. In general it sought to maintain the privileges and liberties of the townsmen; it furnished leadership and organized power to the town in its struggles to free itself from the manorial obligations to its lord and to combat the oppressions of the feudal nobility. It sought to promote and protect the commercial interests of the town and of guild members in various ways. It largely reserved the town market for its own merchants by laying severe restrictions upon the sale of goods by "strangers," that is, merchants from other towns; or by levying taxes upon goods brought in from outside. It reserved for the townsmen the first opportunity to buy town merchandise against the right of purchase by a "stranger." It aimed also to protect members of the guild against other members, should they engage in any unfair or "unbrotherly" practices, such as the use of false weights and measures, the "cornering" of the market by obtaining a controlling share of some commodity ("engrossing"), the selling of goods above the market price ("regrating"), the gaining of some unfair advantage by purchasing goods before they reached the market ("forestalling"). To the extent of its power the merchant guild extended its protection beyond municipal limits to members journeying abroad at a time when travel was beset by numerous hazards—hazards to the goods, liberty, and life of the traveler.

By the thirteenth century the merchant guilds were rapidly slipping from their commanding position. With oligarchial tendencies within the organization and the crystallizing of industrial technique, the merchant guild was unable to keep pace with a more rapidly expanding commercial life. More vigorous and more democratically organized bodies had appeared during the twelfth century and were soon crowding the merchant guilds into a subordinate position, although these continued to function for a long time to come in certain parts of Europe by confining their activity to special, narrow fields. The new bodies to which industrial control now passed were the craft guilds.



The craft guilds reflect the growing influence of specialization by their recognition of an increasing differentiation of interests among industrial occupations. One inclusive organization no longer served the special needs of each craft. Instead of one guild there were now in each town as many craft guilds as there were important industries. The weavers, the dyers, the tailors, the armorers, the drapers, and so on, had each a separate guild. In many ways their functions were similar to the functions of the merchant guilds. They used their power largely to reserve for their own members the economic opportunities of their town both by regulating severely the participation of "strangers" and by prohibiting the making of goods for sale by townsmen who were not members of the proper guild. As coöperative rather than individualist bodies they established minute regulations governing the activity of members. Some of the regulations were designed to protect one or more members against unfair tactics on the part of other members. Others were partly for the protection of guildsmen and partly for the protection of the consumer against inferior materials or craftsmanship, against the excessive use of apprentices in shops, against night work, and against charges higher than the "fair price." These rules and regulations were enforced by officially appointed guild authorities, who had the power to punish serious offenders by fine or imprisonment or expulsion from the guild.

The guild process was further standardized by the definite fixing of the routine preparation which one must pass through in order to qualify for the practice of his craft. Aspiring to the occupation of carpenter, a young man had first to start as an apprentice. The apprenticeship was that phase of his vocational education during which he lived in the house of his master workman, learning by imitation the secrets of the trade. Upon the successful completion of this phase of his education, he then became a journeyman, receiving remuneration for his labor. Neither an apprentice nor a journeyman, however, might perform work directly for the public, but only for and at the direction of his master. In time the journeyman became a master workman, conditional on his acquisition of the

necessary skill and the possession of sufficient wealth to set up a business. To learn a trade took from three to seven years. One learned to do as had been done. So many apprentices should be employed each year, so many hours were to be spent on the work each day, and only so much work, of prearranged quality, was to be turned out.

### **An evaluation of the guild system**

Judged by modern standards the guild system in industry, like the manorial system in agriculture, was wasteful, unprogressive, and inefficient. It would prove utterly inadequate to meet the demands of present-day society, with respect not only to the rich variety of present needs but to the quantity of goods as well. But after this is admitted, it can be said that the guild system met the needs of the comparatively stagnant and sparse population of that time, with its much simpler standards of living, as well as our own economic system meets the needs of present-day society—particularly if one considers the needs of all classes rather than those of the well-to-do minorities. The guild system provided a social mechanism which fitted the individual into his appointed niche, where he found opportunity to contribute his share to the well-being of the community and to maintain himself and family. In this last respect it furnished more than a supporting wage; it provided for some of its members a kind of insurance against sickness, death, and other calamities; and it was a center for social enjoyment. It established a comprehensive system of training and regulation which tended to insure a standard of workmanship and quality of output measured to the demands of the community, and at a price accepted as "fair." (This statement contains substantial truth despite the frequent evidence of fraudulent practices and defective workmanship.) The guild system possessed, too, the advantage of greater stability of employment—that is, a comparative freedom from economic crises of the sort that shake society in our own world and produce widespread misery and want. This advantage is enjoyed by reason of its dependence essentially upon local consumption which varied little from year to year, rather than

upon the vagaries of distant markets. This was particularly true of the guild in its earlier history.

There was another side to the picture. The guild system devoted itself to tradition and custom to a degree that made it unprogressive from our point of view. Methods were stereotyped, and individual initiative and ingenuity had little opportunity to function. The introduction of improved methods or new industries could be effected only with great effort, if at all. The fundamental spirit of monopoly stifled the stimulating effects of competition. Those whose enterprise led them to set up as manufacturers outside the authority of the guilds were crushed; if necessary, by military measures. But it is to be remembered that only in the later stages of guild history did the organizations close the door to newcomers: at first, young men who desired to prepare themselves for a craft were freely admitted, and the organization of the guild was fairly democratic; but as the institution became crystallized, entrance of new apprentices was made difficult, and the administration came to center in the hands of the wealthy masters, who played favorites among relatives and friends in the matter of advancement, and grew more intolerant of innovations of all kinds. It is to be noted that growing conservatism and rigidity were among the first signs of the decline of the social usefulness of the guild system and the signal for its decadence and ultimate destruction.

### Commerce in the Middle Ages

Before the town economy developed as a conspicuous feature of medieval society, commerce, as we have already noticed, was narrowly limited. The products of the villages or manors were much the same over wide areas, and were customarily for home consumption only. Agriculture was subsistence agriculture. But the rise of towns meant markets for surrounding villages that could produce a surplus; it signaled the development of commerce between the towns of one country, between towns in different countries, and between European towns and the East.

From the tenth century on, trade between Europe and the



East grew to important proportions. There were two outstanding theaters of trade—the Baltic area and the Mediterranean. In the former, many of the towns in German and Russian lands organized the famous Hanseatic League as a means of protecting and promoting the exchange of commodities between the Baltic area and the countries southward, a trade mostly in raw materials or foodstuffs, such as grain and fish. The Mediterranean was the great highway for trade with the East. To ports on its eastern littoral and on the Black Sea, Mohammedan Turks and Arabians brought the products of the East—spices, jewels, and other luxuries. From those ports Genoese and Venetian merchants brought the oriental merchandise to the home cities in Italy, whence it was distributed over a large part of Europe. Italian merchants were then the middlemen of Europe. It was this lucrative trade, it will be remembered, which built some of the splendid cities of Italy and laid the economic foundations for the Italian Renaissance.

However, even at its height, commerce was relatively far less important in medieval economy than it is in modern economic life. Its relative insignificance is easily understandable. The population of the Western world was infinitely smaller than now, and the productive capacity of the handicraft system was incomparably lower than that of modern machine technique. But there were limiting factors of another sort. There were few good highways—the best being the ancient Roman roads—and the ordinary instruments of transportation and communication were clumsy and slow. Then, it must not be forgotten that medieval commerce was municipal commerce; the jurisdiction of the towns was limited and their power was insufficient to maintain order over wide areas. Roads were infested with robbers, and the seas were infested with pirates. The resulting insecurity naturally was a great obstacle to trade. More serious still was the handicap of local customs barriers. Every independent town and principality of a feudal lord erected its customs wall. If every state in the American union raised tariff walls against interstate trade, the situation would be comparable to that which existed

in medieval Europe, but not nearly so complicated. To the degree that such a practice hampers trade in any age, the advantages of geographic specialization are lost.

There were in force other economic practices and conceptions to hamper medieval trade. For example, there was prevalent the notion that goods should be exchanged at a price fixed by custom, at a "fair" or "just" price. To sell for less or for more than that price was considered immoral. We know today that the price of a commodity necessarily must change as the difficulty or ease of its production changes. Modern governments recognize the fact that the determination of price is, or should be, a matter of unimpeded competitive forces, and under normal circumstances do not attempt to fix prices.

Another hindrance was the medieval conception of interest. The taking of interest was then considered highly unethical. To take money for the use of money was regarded as an unfair practice, since money itself was thought to be sterile and unproductive. Could it be just to force borrowers to return more than they borrowed? During an age when money was borrowed principally by kings and nobles to finance their wars, the medieval attitude toward interest was more defensible than now, even on economic grounds, for war is a destructive, not a productive, process. The conception of interest as usury broke down as industry and trade developed, and it became evident that borrowed money may be a factor in the production of more wealth, and as such is as deserving of remuneration as labor itself.

Within the limits of their experience and powers, medieval merchants did what they could to overcome the obstacles to commercial expansion. We have already mentioned the Hanseatic League as a coöperative enterprise to promote trade and to furnish the protection which towns acting alone could not provide. The guilds, too, though necessarily in a more limited way, afforded protection to merchants traveling from town to town, and made provision for the families of those who lost their lives on business journeys. The leading Italian towns established municipal navies to ward off injury

both from competitors and from pirates in the Mediterranean. To facilitate trade in a more positive manner there were the medieval markets or "fairs," as they were called, which usually grew up outside the jurisdiction of the guilds.

By the eleventh century fairs had become an important adjunct to the exchange of products and manufactures. Local fairs, drawing together merchants and other buyers over a limited area about the town, were at first held on religious holidays, usually in the market place before the church. These soon established themselves in the economic life of the time and came at frequent intervals, in some places once a week, in others, monthly. More important so far as foreign trade was concerned, and more picturesque, were the great fairs established in a limited number of important towns—fairs coming at wider intervals, and sometimes continuing for weeks. These drew merchants from every important commercial area of Europe. All necessary facilities to stimulate and promote exchange were provided—facilities for the equating of the medley of money values, courts to validate special agreements among the merchants, arrangements for giving foreigners necessary protection. All these practices and devices contributed to the expansion of commerce. By the close of the Middle Ages trade had reached important proportions and had become a decisive factor in the enrichment of European economic life.

#### **An evaluation of the town economy**

The town economy appears to furnish the elements essential to man's material well-being; agriculture, industry, and commerce are combined to enrich his economic life. No longer confined to the narrow limits of his immediate surroundings, he draws his subsistence from a variety of sources; existence is no longer scant and naked, but rich and luxurious—at least for the fortunate. How rich and luxurious that life could be is revealed in the descriptions of the leading city-states of Italy during the period of the Renaissance. Some of the chief towns of the Hanseatic League in The Netherlands and in the German states, though less splendid than Venice, present a pic-



ture of expanding trade and rising prosperity. Some of the flourishing cities of the ancient period, it will be remembered, likewise built their rich civilizations on a town economy elaborated by a rather widely extended commerce.

At best the town economy presents certain disadvantages. It is to be remembered that the town economy went hand in hand with the political autonomy or independence of the town; that is, the town functioned as a political unit as well as the central part of an economic unit. Hence its economic life was organized on the basis of local needs and interests. With the power to control its own economic policy, the town or city was inclined to interpret its local needs and interests narrowly and to formulate restrictive practices detrimental to economic growth.

In the ancient period the practices of the city-states were fairly liberal. While the general ideal of the Greek city-states was to make themselves self-sufficient, and although at times imperial states like Athens regulated trade, prohibitive tariffs were unknown. Nor were the colonies so closely bound to their mother cities as to prevent their dealing with other city-states. This free competitive system permitted the Greek communities to enrich their economic life by drawing on the products of a wide geographical area. The situation among the cities and towns of the Roman Empire was similar. Rome did not interfere with economic laws within the Empire; trade and industry were permitted to develop freely and naturally. The essential difference between economic conditions in Hellas and in the Roman Empire at its prime was the result of the political union that Roman expansion gave to the ancient world. For the most part, the Roman Empire was a union of city-states now no longer hampered in their economic life by constant warfare and innumerable frontiers. It was only in the period of Rome's decline that she departed from this generous policy and turned to a policy of restriction and interference with the economic life of the Empire, in a vain attempt to increase governmental income.

The towns of the Middle Ages had no such advantages as those afforded by the supreme position of Rome in a politically

united world, and their narrow, self-centered practices appear in rather sharp contrast with the more liberal concepts of the Greeks and Romans. Standing alone, as they did, the mediæval towns sought economic self-sufficiency by rigorous policies of restriction. For purposes of trade, territory beyond the jurisdiction of the towns was viewed as "foreign" territory; accordingly, each town commonly walled itself in behind customs and toll barriers, much as national states today wall themselves off from one another. True, the barriers were not designed to prohibit intertown trade; in a sense, they were designed to promote it, but only under such regulations and upon such terms as were calculated to give the townsmen the economic advantage. Obviously, such a situation was harmful to commerce. As already mentioned, to these obstacles to trade there were added the numerous tolls exacted by the feudal nobility when merchandise was carried over their domains and the hazards to both property and life beyond the jurisdiction of the town authority, where robbers on land and pirates at sea commonly preyed upon commerce.

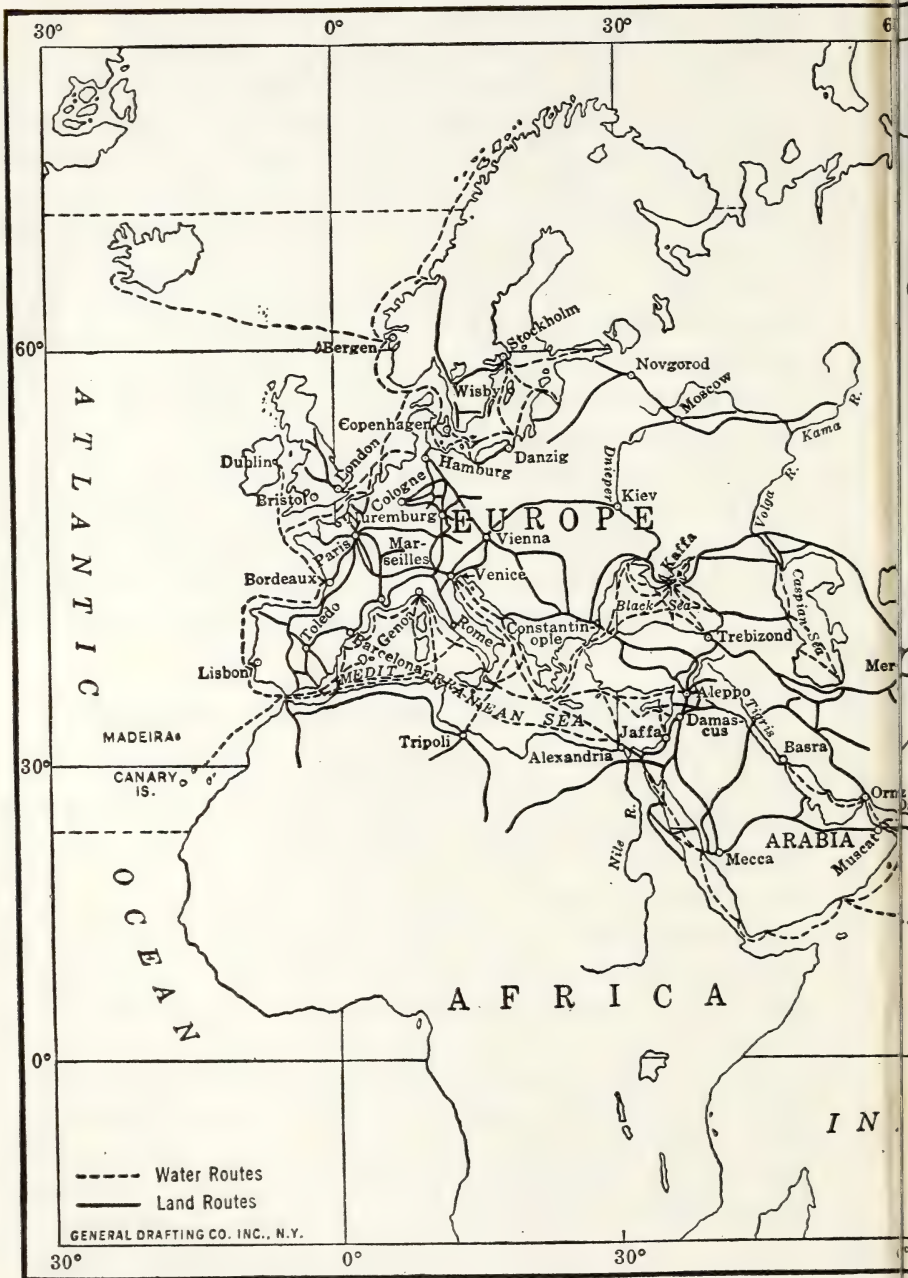
### NATIONAL ECONOMY AND WORLD ECONOMY

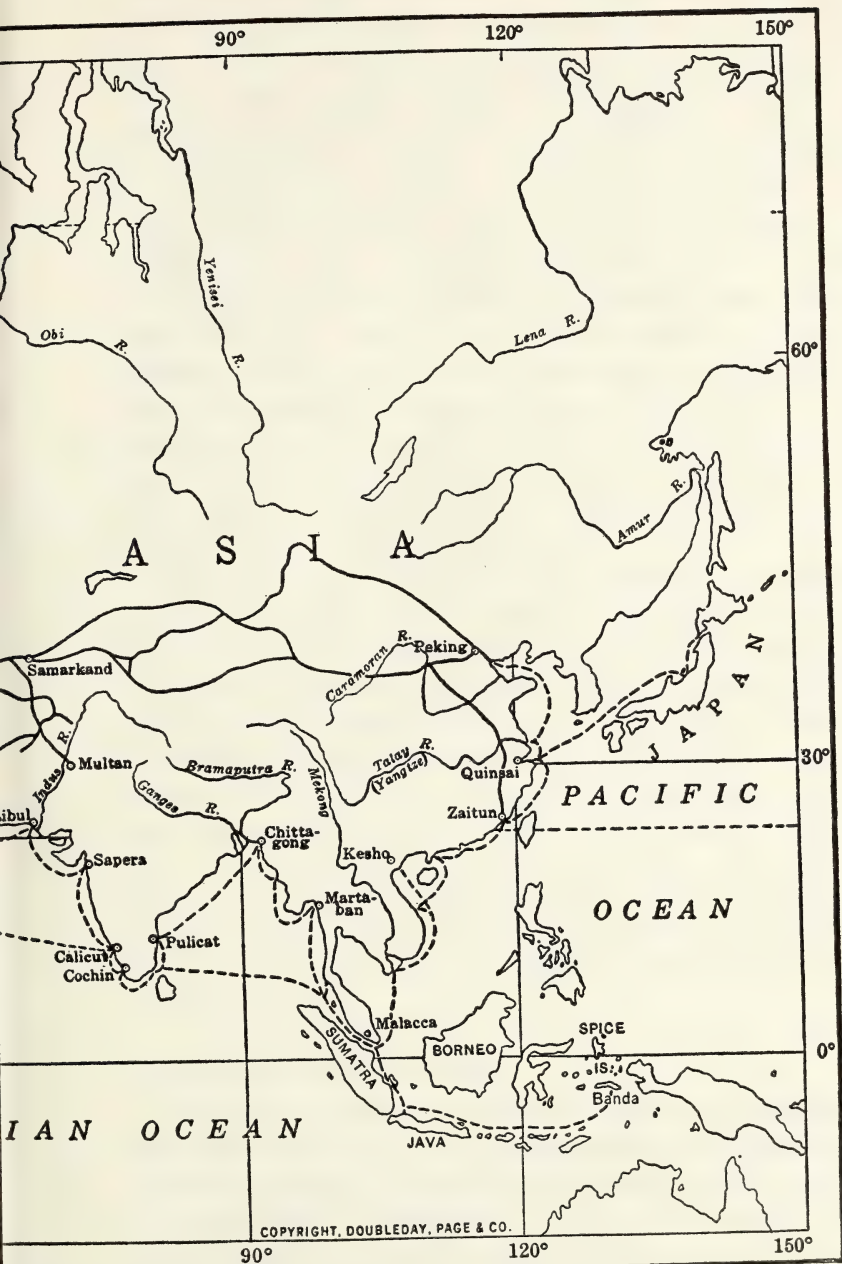
Wherever society is divided into small, independent political units a corresponding division into economic units is to be expected, and such disadvantages to general trade and commerce as just indicated will be the result. Nevertheless, so long as political localism is the dominant fact, economic localism with all its disadvantages will be not only tolerated but vigorously defended by the independent communities themselves as the only kind of economic order possible under the circumstances. On the other hand, if in the course of history society comes to be organized politically into broader and more inclusive units, then within those units the disadvantages of the town economy become intolerable and indefensible. The emergence of national states in the modern period signified that European society had in fact become organized into broader and more comprehensive political units.

The change foredoomed the town economy. The organiza-









TRADE ROUTES





tion of peoples politically on a national basis requires their economic organization on a national basis, as a means of laying the material foundations necessary for national welfare. That is to say, a national economy becomes the next logical and inevitable step; local control as represented by village or town finally gives way to a more comprehensive economic organization based on the needs of the national community. In the course of time each town acknowledges its obedience to some national authority. It comes ultimately to discern an identity of interests with its neighbors and chooses some degree of coöperation with them by the acknowledgment of a common leadership—that of a national government. The establishment of a national authority means greater security for life and property both on land and on sea, inasmuch as the national state is in a position to enforce greater respect for law and order within the whole national realm and to use its greater naval power to protect shipping at sea.

The development of the national economies and of the world economy belongs to the modern period and will be described in later chapters. Suffice it to say now that the early modern monarchies followed the general model set before them by the town economy, particularly the model set before them by the city-state of Venice, which developed an elaborate system of commercial restrictions, established trading stations and colonies, and provided naval protection—all designed to give Venice a monopoly of the trade with the East. Like the Italian cities, the early modern states sought to make themselves self-sufficient by promoting all possible forms of production within the nation, by resorting to protective tariffs, and by building colonial empires.

### **The transition to world economy**

A culminating point was reached in economic development in the nineteenth century with the emergence of a world economy. National economy sufficed as long as each nation lived a comparatively isolated existence.<sup>1</sup> As long as distances over the

<sup>1</sup>It is to be observed, however, that during the period from the sixteenth to the close of the eighteenth century, dynastic governments recognized the need of

globe remained forbiddingly great and slow means of transportation and communication made international commerce uncertain and irregular, the economic unit remained the nation. But once the barriers to international trade were removed and it became possible for the rich and abundant variety of the world's products to be brought to the doors of every nation, a national economy became an anomaly; it was no longer necessary for a nation to live unto itself. The enrichment of the nation's economic life to be gained when all share freely in the fruits of the earth became the sensible goal for all.

Science and machinery, as we have seen, actually did much to bring about such a transformation during the nineteenth century. With the introduction in the eighteenth century of machine production in place of the old handicraft system, the piling-up of surpluses made foreign outlets indispensable; international commerce quickly expanded to tremendous proportions. Thus mechanical ingenuity not only made possible greater production in the factories, but also transformed communication and transportation on both land and sea. The effect of these forces working together has been to produce a striking shrinkage of the world in which we live and to make nations economically interdependent. The whole world has become the market of every nation. Russian agricultural output affects, for better or for worse, our American wheat farming. The price of South American rubber is a factor in the American cost of living. When Great Britain goes off the gold standard, the financial situation in the United States is significantly affected. Germany's internal prosperity affects her capacity to pay war reparations, and is therefore of importance to the Allied nations. Figuratively speaking, every nation has become nervously sensitive in its economic life to conditions in other countries. All of this is true because we are now living in a world economy.

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supplementing the national resources by securing the products of colonial possessions.

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## THE TRANSITION TO MODERN ECONOMY

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**T**HE CLOSING CENTURIES of the Middle Ages and the early modern period witnessed the decay and partial disappearance of many features of medieval economy, particularly in England. The process of disintegration continued into the eighteenth century, when the Industrial Revolution, together with attendant forces, administered what proved ultimately to be the final blow to most of what was left of the old economic structure. It is these changes prior to the Industrial Revolution that we first wish to examine. It is hazardous to generalize about them, because of the irregular way in which they came about. Some conclusions that hold true for such advanced countries as England, France, and Holland are not true of eastern and central Europe, where political and economic development came more slowly.

A few facts will indicate the wide variations in the chronology of the events. Serfdom had passed away completely in England before the close of the sixteenth century, but it persisted in central Europe until the beginning of the nineteenth, and in certain parts of that area to even later times. In Russia it lasted until the sixties of the nineteenth century. Even in England, down to the beginning of the eighteenth century approximately half the farm lands were still divided into strips after the medieval fashion, and the old methods of cultivation

were still widely followed. In France much of the old manorial structure was still standing until the French Revolution destroyed it. While in England the guild system had given way pretty largely by the close of the sixteenth century, in France it was preserved until the Revolution. It is clear, then, that the whole process was halting and irregular. European communities continued to hold on to medieval practices until it became evident that they no longer met the needs of society. In general, however, it may be said that the trend was decidedly away from the localism which had characterized medieval economy toward a broader economic organization suitable to the needs of the newly established national states; that is to say, toward a national economy.

### THE DECAY OF THE MANORIAL SYSTEM

Judged in its own social setting, the manorial system was well adapted to meet the needs of society. A sparse population, relatively static and grouped into small, more or less isolated communities, is a characteristic feature of the background against which manorial practices must be judged. So long as the social setting remained unchanged, these practices would probably remain unchallenged; in certain parts of Europe, however, they were beginning to be modified, as the modern age approached, because social changes were in progress that threw manorial practices out of adjustment. Here and there communities were slowly being made aware of the need of new social instruments to solve a new set of economic problems. In no other country was this change in the economic situation quite so evident as it was in England; this country, therefore, offers the best opportunity for observing those social forces which, manifesting themselves first in the closing centuries of the Middle Ages, continued to operate until much of the manorial structure had been destroyed.

#### **The breaking down of villeinage**

One of the earliest signs of the breaking down of villeinage, or serfdom, in England was the emergence of a new practice



called the *commutation of services*. Modification in economic life had made it mutually desirable to lord and villein to acknowledge a new relationship. With the progress of the change, it became more and more the customary procedure for villeins to meet their obligations to their lords in money instead of labor, and for the lords to hire labor for wages or to let out their land to leaseholders. Thus, the villeins gradually obtained release from their traditional obligations of actual work by making money payments. Slowly but surely, the lord was assuming the role of landlord; the villein, that of tenant.

One factor leading to the commutation of services was the expansion of English commerce, in which wool figured prominently. English wool was sent mainly to The Netherlands, the English receiving manufactured cloth or silver in return. The silver was coined into money, and thus it got into circulation. The expansion of commerce stimulated the development of towns with an ever-increasing population devoted to industry and commerce. The result was a growing pressure upon agriculture to increase production. But in the main the villeins had produced for their own consumption, and ordinarily the manorial lords likewise had been interested in agriculture for direct consumption. Servile labor, shackled by tradition, could hardly be expected to produce more than a meager subsistence. Thus the growth of towns produced a problem. If the greater demand for agricultural products was to be met, more efficient methods in agriculture must be adopted. Moreover, there was the stimulus of profit, provided surpluses of food could be produced. It became apparent that servile labor, sluggish and unimaginative, was not good economy. The economic development that emerged to meet this new economic situation was, as we have indicated, commutation of services.

The change was revealed in new forms of cultivation and land tenure. In some areas the former manorial lord turned to what is called *demesne farming*. He consolidated the strips of his *demesne*—that is, his own personal holdings—and commonly let out the land to leaseholders who paid him rent; in

some cases, he hired agricultural laborers who tilled a part of the demesne for him in return for wages. Some of the liberated villeins proceeded in a similar fashion. They exchanged strips with one another and consolidated their own holdings. They then tilled the farms thus created as tenants, paying rent to their former lords. Thus in those parts of England where these changes had taken place manorial lords became landlords, and the liberated villeins became leaseholders on the demesne of a landlord or agricultural laborers working for wages on the demesne or, in some cases, on the holding of other liberated villeins.

### The Black Death

In the fourteenth century a terrible plague swept over Europe. In England this "Black Death" wiped out approximately one-third of the inhabitants. So great a reduction of the population was bound to have important social consequences. One result was a further disturbance of traditional practices.

The decline in population placed the remaining English laborers in a strategic position. We know that as the supply of any agent of production decreases, its relative importance increases. Fewer laborers meant greater importance per laborer, just as fewer farmers today would mean greater importance per farmer. It is scarcity of an agent of production, either land, labor, or capital, that makes it comparatively more significant. In this case it was the laborers who became relatively scarce as compared with other agents. In this situation the Black Death generated forces which acted in two opposite directions so far as its effect upon villeinage was concerned. On those manors where the villeins were largely or wholly destroyed by the plague the manorial lords were compelled to go into the labor market and bid for agricultural workers. Under the circumstances existing it was not likely that men would consent to accept the old servile status. The result was a further undermining of serfdom. On the other hand, where the manorial population had largely escaped the effects of the plague, the tendency of the manorial lords appears to

have been to hold more tenaciously than ever to the customary services of their villeins. This twofold effect of the Black Death makes it difficult to measure its contribution to the disappearance of serfdom in England.

Another interesting consequence of the plague has no direct bearing upon the disappearance of villeinage. This was its effect upon wages. Since it had become customary to hire free laborers for money, and since the supply had been so greatly diminished, laborers could ask for higher wages from their lords. The rise in wages was inevitable, but it was also contrary to tradition. Certain wages and rents had become habitual; a departure from them was therefore resisted by the owners of land, who were clearly the losers by the change. The lords argued that the customary payments were just, and that the higher demands of the laborers were manifestly wrong. In the emergency the lords appealed to the government for aid. Laws were passed known as the Statutes of Laborers, designed to prohibit laborers from demanding more than the customary wages and to force them to accept employment at rates in effect before the great plague. Those failing to comply were subject to imprisonment. The statutes were frequently reissued; but in spite of all legal insistence wages continued to rise. The Black Death, with its attendant depopulation, was raising the economic status of the free laborers.

### **The enclosure movement**

The emancipation of villeins and the disappearance of the manorial system in general were still further hastened by the enclosure of lands for sheep-raising. Up to the Hundred Years' War between England and France (1337-1453) the raising of wool had been an important industry in England. Wool was exchanged for manufactured cloth from Flanders; but as the war continued, this trade was hampered and the English were driven to a much more extensive manufacture of cloth at home to meet the domestic demand. Thus began an enterprise which was to become of first importance in the economic history of England. Landlords, scenting the oppor-



tunities for profit in the growing demand for wool, began to turn more and more from the production of grain to the raising of sheep. They had found that they could thus reduce the expense for labor, for a given amount of land utilized for sheep-raising required far fewer laborers than if used for agriculture. But the old system of land tenure under which various serfs or tenants held adjoining strips of land was an obstacle to sheep-raising, which necessitated a broad enclosed acreage under one control. The prospective sheep-raiser, therefore, proceeded to evict the former grain-raising villeins or tenants and thus to get possession of many adjoining strips, which he hedged or fenced in.

The enclosure movement was the most powerful force making for the disappearance of villeinage in England. Land devoted to sheep-raising, since it was now definitely marked off from other holdings, took on more clearly the characteristics of private property, as we use the term today. The change was inevitable and of fundamental economic importance, but like all rapid changes, both good and bad, it meant great suffering to that class which because of its fairly fixed habits was unable to adjust itself to the new order. The case is somewhat analogous to what happens now when a new invention that contributes largely to social progress does so only at the expense of those unfortunates whom it robs of their means of livelihood. So in England, as the enclosures continued on into the sixteenth century, thousands of men were set adrift from their medieval moorings to wander in search of new employment. Opposition to the change was naturally very great, and contemporary literature cried out against the cruelty of enclosures. Time after time the government sought to check the movement but, as usually happens, found its efforts ineffectual against the force of economic changes.

The events briefly indicated here mark the beginnings of a fundamental change in rural economy. The enclosure movement, first motivated by an interest in sheep culture and later by increased demands for grains and other foodstuffs, continued in England down into the nineteenth century. From the fourteenth century on the number of free laborers and

tenants was constantly increasing through a diminution in the ranks of the villeins. In one way or another those remaining were obtaining freedom from their lords. Some merely ran away, others were voluntarily granted their freedom. Basically, the medieval relation of lord and serfs based on customary services was becoming economically obsolete. By the middle of the fifteenth century, though the legal form of villeinage remained, most of the English rural population were freemen, and in the sixteenth century the process was practically completed. But the disappearance of serfdom did not carry with it the widespread abandonment of medieval methods of cultivation. The change in that direction came more or less haltingly until we reach the eighteenth century, when the process is so quickened that some have referred to it as an agricultural revolution.

Even before the eighteenth century, however, the pattern of modern agriculture could be discerned. The trend of events pointed inevitably to a definite change from the conception of landholding for use to private ownership; from subsistence farming to commercial farming; from customary services to labor for wages; from coöperative activity to individual competitive activity. As these changes proceeded, the physical aspect of the English rural areas was slowly undergoing a striking modification. Now, in place of a land divided into innumerable strips, there appeared in some districts large consolidated estates of yeomen, country gentlemen, or nobles. Truly, rural society was beginning to take on a more modern appearance. But again it must be emphasized that the transformation came slowly in some of its aspects, and at first only in favored localities. One must wait until the nineteenth century to find the process complete.

### THE DECAY OF THE GUILDS

The guilds did not suddenly lose their control over industry. The decline of the system was gradual, and its final disappearance in different parts of Europe came at widely separated periods. It declined first in England, and it is in

that country that the causes of its loss of power can best be observed. On the Continent, under somewhat similar conditions, the guilds declined from the opening of the sixteenth century on, but there they continued as an important feature of industrial life long after they had ceased to function in England.

### **The emergence of the domestic system**

From the fourteenth century on there are increasing signs of the declining power of the English craft guilds. Internal conditions similar to those which had earlier weakened the merchant guilds now appeared in the craft guilds—the concentration of control in the hands of wealthy masters and the restriction of full membership by the imposing of heavy payments. These monopolistic tendencies caused dissatisfaction and led to the organization of journeymen guilds outside the parent bodies but subordinate to them. With the development of the cloth-making industry a more powerful movement emerged affecting the position of the guild system. This movement resulted in what came to be called the “domestic system.”

The manufacturing of wool offered good profits. A class of enterprising merchants arose who attracted numbers of dissatisfied craftsmen to set up establishments in villages and towns outside the jurisdiction of the guilds and the industrial centers. The merchant bought the raw materials and supplied the craftsmen who worked for him for wages. In some cases he might even supply the necessary tools. The finished product belonged to the merchant, who disposed of it in local or other markets. It was to this type of productive enterprise that the term “domestic system” was applied. It carried with it important deviations from the guild system. In effect it was a defiance of the earlier control which the craft guilds had exercised over industry. To a considerable extent it drew industry out of the old, established centers and spread manufacturing through a large part of rural England. It resembled our present-day organization in some respects in that the workers owned neither the raw materials nor the finished



product, nor, in some cases, the tools with which they worked. The domestic system, therefore, marked something new in industry; it signified a separation between work and ownership. It also signified the growing power of the merchant class and a corresponding decrease in the power of the guilds. What happened in cloth-making also occurred, in lesser degree, in a number of other industries.

### **The influence of the national monarchies**

A second force tending to break down the guild system was the development of the national states under absolute kings. To establish themselves in complete power, monarchs deemed it necessary to destroy the political localism of the medieval nobility, the power of the Roman Church in temporal and, to a degree, in religious matters, and the local power of the towns in industrial and commercial affairs. There was gradually adopted a systematic program of intervention in the activities of the people. Economically this meant the diminution of the controlling authority of the guilds. Hitherto the craft guilds had been all-important in the regulation of economic life in the towns; they had also exercised a powerful political influence in town government, enjoying for themselves almost complete political independence. But now the government took over the many-sided task of promoting national economic development. It controlled money by securing for itself a monopoly of coinage, thus establishing uniformity and preventing counterfeiting; it created a national system of taxation; it instituted a system of courts for the enforcement of its law. The granting of special privileges to towns was discontinued, and monopolies were reserved for companies of national scope. By the Statute of Apprentices, passed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, an attempt was made to fix wages, hours, years of apprenticeship, and innumerable other details.

What might be termed the final decisive blow in the extinction of the guild system of production came toward the middle of the sixteenth century as an incident in the English Reformation. During the reign of Edward VI a radical religious

movement swept over the country. In its zeal to erase all "superstitions" of Roman derivation and, it must be said, to reap further material rewards, the government, then under control of the reform party, enacted laws under which all property of the guilds utilized for religious purposes was confiscated. Such property comprised a considerable part of the wealth of the guilds; for during preceding centuries many bequests had been made by departed brothers on condition that the guild concerned should perform certain stipulated religious duties. The government's action not only struck at the economic foundations of the guilds, but it went far to destroy the religious bonds which had contributed to hold the members together. These religious bonds were still further weakened when the religious dramas—the miracle plays, which had long been presented by the craft guilds—were taken over during the sixteenth century by professional players or displaced by other forms of the drama.

By the opening years of the seventeenth century the craft guilds had run their course. As the central government developed its power, the hitherto independent towns became subsidiary units in a bigger political and economic organization, and the guilds steadily lost power and influence. A sentimental attachment to a long tradition was effective in preserving some of the great English guilds well into the modern period, but only as social organizations devoted to the retention of some of the colorful ceremonials of a cherished but outgrown past. As economic institutions vital to the life of English society the guilds had ceased to function. The control of economic life henceforth centered in the state.

### THE REVOLUTION IN COMMERCE

In medieval times commerce was small in volume, narrowly confined geographically, and rigidly controlled by the towns through guild and municipal enactments. It was inter-municipal and almost entirely intra-European. There is one conspicuous exception to this statement—the trade with the East; but this was monopolized by the Italian cities, particularly

by Venice. The Orient, which had almost faded from man's ken after the collapse of the Roman empire, was rediscovered during the Crusades and presently became the Eldorado of the Middle Ages. Whoever had control of the highways to the East seemed to hold the keys to wealth, prestige, and power; and the Italian cities had this control. Countries like Portugal, Spain, France, The Netherlands, and England stood at the back door, and shared only indirectly in the profits of the oriental trade.

### **The great discoveries and their significance**

With the development of powerful national monarchies under ambitious kings, the monopoly enjoyed by the Italian cities in trade with the East was challenged. It became evident, as knowledge of the Orient increased, that the discovery of a direct route to the sources of supply would greatly enhance profits by cutting out the toll paid the Mohammedan middlemen for carriage of goods, and at the same time break the monopoly of the Italian cities. There was also a religious impulse to be considered, the passionate desire of many Catholics to carry Christianity beyond the boundaries of Europe; for the crusading spirit still lived in Catholic countries. Thus the lure of gold, combined with a missionary zeal, stimulated the desire to venture into unknown lands. Such were the guiding considerations which led Prince Henry of Portugal to seek to tap the East by an all-sea route around Africa. The final accomplishment of that project by Vasco da Gama in the closing years of the fifteenth century, and the discovery of the New World by Columbus, likewise bent upon finding a water route to India for Spain, were the immediate causes of a momentous change in the character of European commerce, a change so rapid and so profound as to be called a commercial revolution. What was the character of the revolution, and what did it signify in the economic history of Europe?

Europe rapidly faced about commercially; not only did the New World lie westward, but even the approach to the much-coveted trade with the East lay through Atlantic waters. The

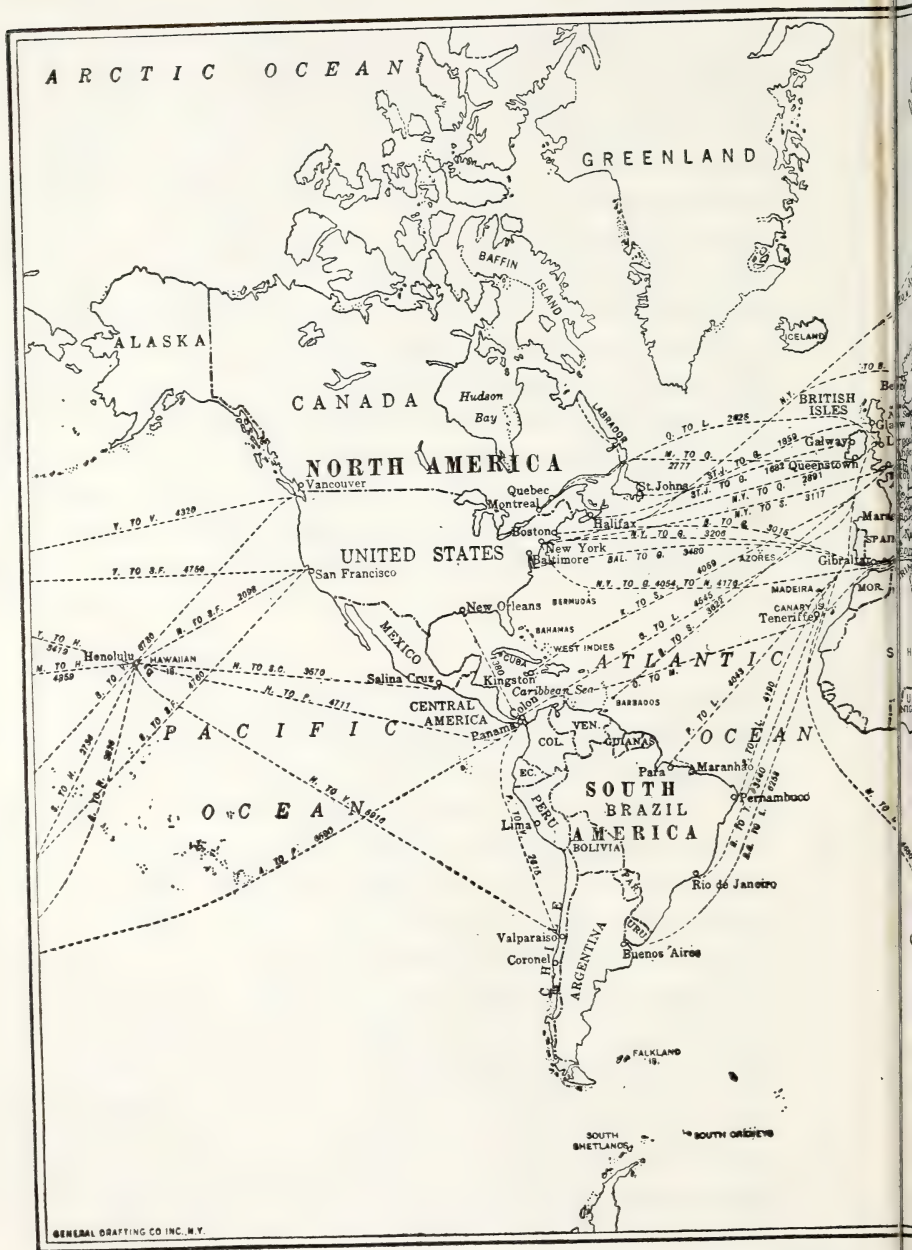


preëminence of the Mediterranean as a theater of commerce, together with that of the Italian cities, was lost, never to be wholly regained—though there was a partial restoration when the Suez Canal was cut in the nineteenth century. The Atlantic seaboard succeeded to the position in commerce formerly held by the Mediterranean. Commerce increased in magnitude, in the variety of goods exchanged, and in geographical extent, until European sails dotted the whole wide expanse of ocean. The desire to know the world and to appropriate its wealth to the use of Europe became insatiable; an imperialist impulse took possession of the dynastic houses, and there began that prodigious expansionist movement which has carried the elements of European culture like seeds to every corner of the globe. The expansion of commerce meant the expansion of industry, the growth of town life, and the rising importance of the burgher class; the bourgeoisie, despised and unprivileged during most of the medieval period, were now launched on a forward movement that ended in the economic conquest of the earth and the enjoyment of its richest fruits. (See Map 16.)

### **The mercantile system**

In the course of the change from local to national economy, a theory that earlier had been applied by the commercial towns and city-states was adopted by the European princes and elaborated to fit the economic needs of the nation. The theory is called mercantilism, and the organization of industry and trade which was built upon it is called the mercantile system. It was another expression of a growing national consciousness, and of the determination of kings to bring the whole life of their realms under the directing and organizing authority of the monarchist state. In execution it aimed at such regulation of industry and commerce as would, presumably, strengthen and enrich the national state, which, on the Continent at least, was essentially the royal dynasty. The dynastic houses of Europe viewed their realms much in the light of vast royal estates to be managed from above in the interest of the dynasty. They knew that political power





16. MAP SHOWING PRINCIPAL SEA LINES ESTABLISHED BY THE U. S. NAVY.





PUBLISHED AFTER THE COMMERCIAL REVOLUTION



rested upon economic power, economic power rested upon national wealth; and national wealth, so they calculated, was measured in money—gold and silver. With an abundance of money the kings could support the grandeur of their realms and could carry on dynastic wars successfully as a means of enhancing their position. The great question, therefore, was how to get money.

Mercantilism furnished the answer. According to that theory foreign commerce must be so regulated by government as to produce what was called a favorable balance of trade; that is to say, the value of goods exported must be greater than the value of goods imported. Hence, the nation sought to export goods of high value and to import goods of low value. The difference in value, that is, the "favorable balance," would remain in the country and so enrich it, for the mercantilist held that the nation with the largest amount of precious metals was the richest nation. In keeping with this theory the national monarchies proceeded to adopt a policy of regulation designed to encourage the exportation of manufactured goods—that is, goods of high value—and the importation of raw materials—that is, goods of low value.

Now it appeared logical that if the objective of the state was to sell more than it bought, that state would be best off which came nearest to making itself economically self-sustaining, for then the need of buying from rival states would be least. The self-sufficient state became the economic ideal. The king and his ministers sought, therefore, to make their country independent of other countries for things that could be produced at home. Every resource of the nation was to be utilized. The export of gold was forbidden. New industries were encouraged through the granting of bounties, subsidies, or monopolies; and once the industries were created, their prosperity was promoted by various governmental policies. They were provided with the necessary technical skill by governmental regulation of labor and by laws forbidding the trained worker to leave the country. They were shielded from foreign competition by tariffs; the exportation of their surplus manufactures was promoted by a number of



devices; they were favored by the free importation of necessary raw materials, while the export of domestic raw products was discouraged. To prevent the drain of money from the nation through payment of transportation charges to foreign carriers, laws were passed to stimulate shipbuilding and the training of sailors, and to prohibit the carriage of goods in foreign vessels or vessels manned by foreign sailors. In England such laws are known as Navigation Acts.

Mercantilist thought affected the policy of the absolutist governments in still another way. It was evident that limitations of climate made it impossible for European countries to produce all the essentials of life—such products, for example, as cotton, sugar, tobacco, certain dyes, and spices. It appeared, therefore, that if the state was to be self-sufficient it must acquire possessions in other parts of the world, particularly in the tropics, which could supply the products needed to supplement those of the nation. The logic of this reasoning contributed to the urge driving the European states toward colonization. The time was ripe, for the opening of the all-sea route around Africa to the East and the discovery of the New World opened up vast fields for exploitation and excited dreams of untold wealth to be obtained in strange lands. It is hardly necessary to add that it was this colonial impulse that led to the expansion of European civilization, the laying of the foundations of future nations in the Americas, and the establishment of numerous footholds by Europeans in Africa and Asia.

Once colonies had been planted, the policy adopted toward them was also determined by mercantilism; the same logic that drove the mother country to establish colonies also drove her to regulate their economic life in a manner designed to give her a more or less monopolistic enjoyment of colonial markets and of the raw materials to be obtained, especially those not found in the homeland. This policy of monopoly and exclusion led to a fierce rivalry among the nations for the choice colonial areas. Armaments were built up, and war was accepted as a profitable instrument of state policy. The consequence, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was a long series

of trade wars during which nations struggled for the mastery of the sea, and empires were lost and won.

In so far as mercantilism led to increased production by stimulating new industries and promoting a fuller development of the natural resources of the nation, it was fundamentally sound. Moreover, by giving a stronger impulse to the shift from a local to a national economy, it doubtless helped much to lay the foundations for a richer national life. Nevertheless, the economist of today discovers some curious fallacies in the mercantilist theory, particularly in the idea that growth in national wealth demands that the nation shall sell more than it buys. If a country continues indefinitely to export goods of higher value than it imports, it is only succeeding in impoverishing itself. True welfare can be achieved only by the importation of goods of as high value as the exports. International trade is only barter; no country can go on indefinitely giving up more goods than it receives, taking the difference in money. We feed, clothe, and shelter ourselves, as a nation, not with money, but with goods. The growing prosperity of the western countries of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is not to be explained by the accumulation of "treasure"—that is, of gold and silver—at the expense of the production of consumable goods; economic improvement came, in spite of the mercantilist's fallacious theory of wealth, as a result of the enlargement and better coördination of the agents of production under national economy.

### **Changes in business practices**

Numerous changes in business concepts and business practices were found necessary to meet the demands of an enlarged and more complicated economic life. Important among these was an altered attitude toward the charging of interest. In the preceding chapter, we mentioned the prevalent view held during the Middle Ages that the charging of interest for the loan of money was immoral in that the lender was taking an unfair advantage when he exacted from the borrower more than he had lent him. As trade developed, however, it became apparent that the payment of interest was no injustice

imposed on the borrower, since with his acquired funds he was enabled to obtain capital goods which, when put to productive uses, earned enough to make payment of the interest possible. This realization of the economic justification for charging interest resulted in a modification of the laws; about the middle of the sixteenth century it became legal to charge for the use of money.

In the development of the practice of borrowing funds we see the inception of another important change, the introduction of the banking system. The expansion of commerce and the financial needs of governments, particularly for the carrying on of war, created a growing demand for money and credit. Before the close of the thirteenth century banks had appeared in Italy, and by the sixteenth century there were banking houses established in Germany and Holland. In this development England lagged far behind the Continent. During the seventeenth century, until the establishment of the Bank of England in 1694, England's chief "bankers" were the goldsmiths. It had become customary to leave supplies of gold in the care of the goldsmith—subject, of course, to withdrawal. Since the goldsmith acted as custodian, he might exact a charge for his services. In time the goldsmiths discovered that funds left with them would not all be withdrawn at the same time, and that they, therefore, could safely make loans at interest. They had discovered the basic principle of banking practiced by banks today when they keep only a small reserve (about ten per cent) against deposits, and make profitable use of the remainder of their customers' funds.

Another development in trade and commerce is worthy of mention. As business adventure grew and a need for increased capitalization arose, individual enterprises gave way to partnership concerns, and these in turn to corporations. The corporation made possible large-scale production, and, generally, a lower cost of production per unit. The investor—that is, the man who had bought stock in the corporation—had this advantage, that whereas formerly as a private producer or as a member of a partnership he had been personally responsible for all debts incurred, now as a stockholder in a



corporation he could not be held liable for the debts of the corporation in case of failure. All he could lose was the amount he had invested in stock. This growth in size of business enterprises made necessary a more elaborate system of accounting. Such a system came to England from Italy.

### THE GREAT ECONOMIC REVOLUTION

The account given in the preceding pages of the development of economic institutions and practices after the fourteenth century presents a picture of medieval economy in a process of decay and the emergence of new forms of economic organization and procedure. By the eighteenth century much of the structure of England's medieval economy had been considerably altered. On the Continent, with the exception of the Dutch Netherlands, medieval traditions lasted longer and exerted a greater influence than in England. But in all the leading countries of Europe mercantilism had contributed to the transfer of the control of economic life from the earlier local control of the towns to the royal governments. These countries had built up an extensive foreign trade. Most of them had established empires of vastly greater geographic extent than the mother countries themselves and were seeking to monopolize their wealth and trade. Yet with all these changes and all this turmoil, the economic world was not yet born; for even in England approximately half of the cultivated land was still open-farmed according to the medieval two-field or three-field system, industry was almost entirely handicraft, and international trade was comparatively in its infant stage.

We may conclude that in the early eighteenth century European practices in agriculture, industry, and trade resembled those of the Middle Ages more closely than those of the world as we now know it. And yet, within about a hundred and fifty years—within, that is, a relatively short period as history goes—economic life presented a scene which we can now identify as the background of our own lives. How did this striking transformation take place? It was the result of a great economic revolution that first took place in Great

Britain and later spread to other parts of the Western world. This fundamental change involved two related movements: a revolution in agriculture and a revolution in industry and commerce. The series of events which these movements represent marks a climax in the transition from medieval to modern economy. Their ultimate result was the emergence of modern economic institutions and practices.

### **The agricultural revolution**

The agricultural revolution in England belongs to the latter part of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth century. Any attempt to fix exact dates is futile, since the process was going on during a large part of the eighteenth century and continued well into the nineteenth. The revolution was essentially a culminating point in a process that we have observed going on from the fifteenth century, the process of enclosing the old manorial holdings and consolidating them into more or less extensive farms or pasture lands. Most of the early enclosures, it will be recalled, were effected in order to facilitate sheep culture. Thereafter, particularly during the reign of Elizabeth (1558-1603), this procedure was utilized to promote the production of grains. In the eighteenth century enclosure was revived on a larger scale than ever before. The process did not cease completely until the 1860's, but we may say that by 1830 medieval agriculture had practically passed out of existence in England.

This revolutionary change was fundamentally a response to the demand for a greater production of foodstuffs, a demand which could not be satisfied under the wasteful and inefficient methods of the old agricultural system. This increased demand for foodstuffs was mainly the result of the great growth of population in the eighteenth century. Toward the close of the eleventh century there were fewer than two millions of people in England; by the beginning of the eighteenth—six centuries later—the population of England and Wales had increased to about five and a half millions; it had more than doubled. During the next hundred years, 1700 to 1800, the increase was approximately the same, about three and a half

millions; that is, in a single century as many people had been added to the population as in the preceding six centuries.

Another important factor in bringing on agricultural change was industrial expansion. The eighteenth century marks the beginning of a revolution in industry in England, a revolution which was to displace handicraft production by power-driven machines. With the growth of machine industry began the concentration of population in large towns. These towns constituted a market for agricultural products. As the towns grew and became more definitely industrial and commercial in nature, their dependence on the rural areas for agricultural products also grew, for it should be remarked, in passing, that the expansion of urban life presupposes the ability of the rural areas to provide adequate food supplies. By the close of the century these demands, increased still more by the long wars with France (1793-1815), placed agriculture under great pressure to supply the market for food.

However, it is to be noted that the increasing demand for food did not outrun the powers of the country to produce under the then existing agricultural methods until after the middle of the eighteenth century. Until 1760 not only did England's production of food suffice to feed the population, but there was a surplus of grain for export. After that date, until 1792, importations about kept pace with exportations; thereafter importations steadily rose and exports ceased. This reversal of conditions was not the result of increasing population alone, but of unfavorable weather conditions, which during those years brought a succession of poor crops. The growing shortage of food supply was registered in the price of wheat, which rose irregularly until in the early years of the nineteenth century its average price was nearly three times as great as it had been during the half century preceding 1765. All of this means that England was no longer able to feed herself; population was pressing on food supply. The situation contributed to speed up enclosure and the introduction of improved methods of farming.

Lastly, there was the influence of increasing capital and of a growing fund of scientific knowledge. English industrial and



commercial enterprise during the colonial period had, on the whole, brought rich returns. The application of capital promised a profitable investment to landlords and businessmen with capital, who bought land not only for profit but for the social prestige which land ownership gave. With capital to finance enclosure and to utilize the new scientific knowledge some of these men turned to farming and stock-breeding. These enterprises were carried on frequently in a scientific manner as large-scale, individualist business ventures. The early leaders in this agricultural pioneering were known as "improving landlords." To them much credit is due for the spread of the new agricultural knowledge—much of it imported from the Continent—and for the invention of improved farming tools. They persisted with their experiments when experiments were regarded by many as futile if not silly.

Jethro Tull was one of these. His contribution lay in demonstrating the great value of thorough plowing, planting in rows by means of drills, and cultivating the soil between rows. To expedite the process he invented a drill and a horse hoe. His methods produced good crops without the aid of fertilizers. Another was "Turnip" Townshend, who learned how to recover swamp or sandy tracts for cultivation by mixing in clay and lime. He also introduced a four-course rotation of wheat, turnips, barley, and clover that made it unnecessary to allow part of his land to lie fallow. His elevation of the turnip to a place of importance proved valuable in animal husbandry, for it became almost as important as animal fodder in England as is corn in our own country. Still another, Robert Bakewell, made his contribution by the introduction of improved methods of stock-breeding. He kept careful genealogical records of animals for breeding purposes and succeeded in greatly increasing the quality of meats and the weight of the animals. Finally, there was Arthur Young, whose enthusiasm for improving agriculture knew no bounds. He went on extensive observation excursions on the Continent, rode hundreds of miles on horseback abroad and in England, and published a great number of articles to disseminate the knowledge he had

gained. Gentlemen farmers like these mentioned were as important in agriculture as some of the mechanical geniuses were in promoting the revolution in industry.

The change here described was a fundamental one, signifying the passing of the last important vestiges of manorial agriculture. Great landed estates, the creation of which had been initiated on a small scale centuries before, now became a dominant feature of British rural life. On these great estates the actual cultivators were either tenants who paid rent to the landlord or agricultural laborers who hired out for a wage. In the enclosing process the small landholder had been crowded out; only those with large capital could hope to survive in competition with the new agricultural landlords. Land in England had virtually become a monopoly enjoyed by a landed aristocracy, whose prestige and power were to impress English social and political life during the nineteenth century.

Another result economically important was that the production of foodstuffs was so greatly increased that it became possible for English agriculture to continue to feed the growing population with little resort to outside sources. It is true that this was accomplished at the sacrifice of the masses of the poor, for it was found necessary to protect English agriculture by protective tariffs—the Corn Laws—which kept the prices of grain high. Even after protection was removed in the 1840's, agriculture in England continued to be relatively profitable. Down to the decade of the 1870's four-fifths of the grain, meat, dairy products, and wool consumed in the British Isles was produced at home. Since the 1870's, however, competition from the United States and other food-producing countries has played a part in undermining British agriculture.

The change was significant in still another way—one that relates the agricultural transformation directly to the revolution in industry. The enclosure movement set adrift thousands of small freeholders, tenants, agricultural laborers, and squatters, who flocked to the towns in search of work. Some of the more enterprising of them became factory-owners themselves; others in great numbers furnished an abundant labor market to be drawn on by the new machine industry.

### The Industrial Revolution

More fundamental and far-reaching in its ultimate effect than the transformation in agriculture was the economic change known as the Industrial Revolution. It is not easy to give the Industrial Revolution a comprehensive definition; what it was is revealed in its manifestations. The Revolution was industrial only in its origin and in its primary manifestations: it began with inventions that transformed production by substituting, in large measure, machines for the craftsman's tools, machine labor for human labor, water power and steam power for human muscular power. As the Revolution progressed, it affected political and social as well as economic life. Our present interest, however, centers in the changes in economic practices and institutions; other aspects, social and political, will be treated in later chapters.

We are inclined to associate the word "revolution" with changes attending the violent overthrow of governments. The term has, however, a broader application in the study of social phenomena; it may be properly applied to any comparatively rapid and at the same time profound change in social practices or institutions, as contrasted with the normally slower change which is sometimes described as "evolution." It was such a change that came over economic processes and institutions in the later decades of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth century. It was not recognized as a "revolution" by contemporary observers; it was not until considerably after the close of the period usually assigned to the phenomenon that the term "Industrial Revolution" was applied to it by Arnold Toynbee, an English economist. Seen in historical perspective, the designation is defensible. The years 1760 to 1830 are commonly assigned to the Industrial Revolution in England, the country in which it first occurred. Compared to a political revolution which may bring about volcanic changes in a year or less, changes over a period of seventy years assume the aspect of ordinary historical developments. Yet when the student considers the far-reaching implications of the changes begun about 1760 he may not think



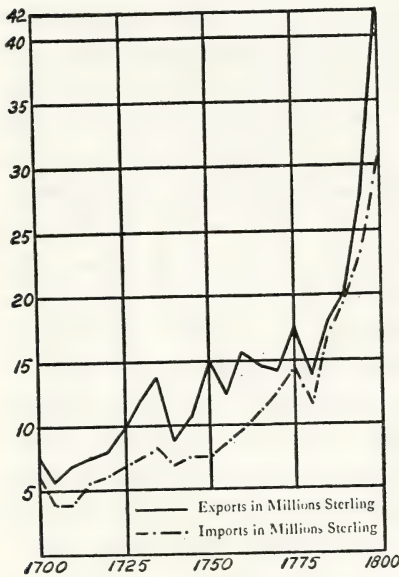
the term "revolutionary" inappropriate. In a relatively short number of years the world was transformed in its very fundamentals. Nevertheless, the student must also remember, as we shall have occasion to repeat, that the Industrial Revolution did not start from scratch; more accurately, it only brought about changes on a large scale and with great rapidity, the groundwork for which had been laid in previous years.

The dates 1760 to 1830 must therefore be accepted as somewhat arbitrary if they are not to be misleading. The first inventions which, in their later development, contributed to the change came fairly early in the eighteenth century, so that some writers have spoken in general terms of the whole of that century as a period of experimentation, invention, and trial; and of the nineteenth century as the period of realization. The year 1830 is chosen to mark the close of the Revolution simply because by that time the results were so decisive as to make it apparent that the machine age was well established in England. But the forces producing change did not cease to operate in 1830; in fact, they have continued ever since to affect society. At frequent intervals in the recent past new inventions have displaced hundreds, and even thousands, of skilled workmen; electricity is displacing steam in certain branches of industry and transportation; revolutionary changes in management and organization, the massing of capital for productive purposes, the extension of giant power—these and other like phenomena furnish evidence of the march of the Industrial Revolution in our own day. The forces which it unharnessed are cumulative, and are increasingly vital in our own generation.

Why did Western society turn from handicraft to machine production? The question takes on special interest when it is remembered that from the early Stone Age down to the eighteenth century man had been able to supply his needs with hand tools, even in the high civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome. We look for the general answer to this question where we would look in the case of any institutional change—that is, in the changing needs of society and the inadequacy of existing institutions and techniques to satisfy those needs. Some of the root causes of the Industrial Revolution are to be found

in the causes of the agricultural revolution; in fact, as already mentioned, these two great changes are different phases of one comprehensive economic development. A combination of forces and circumstances had created a kind of society for which traditional methods of production no longer sufficed.

CHART VI. SHOWING THE UPWARD TREND OF BRITISH FOREIGN TRADE, PARTICULARLY DURING EARLY PERIOD OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION.<sup>1</sup>



A cardinal factor in creating this new society was the phenomenal increase of population and its growing organization after the middle of the eighteenth century. The greatly expanded demand for goods was not merely a matter of multiplying individuals to be clothed, housed, and fed; urbanization was itself significant. In the first place, it brought increasing numbers of persons in contact with markets displaying a much greater variety of goods, which, if they could be acquired, would add much to the enjoyment of living. Evidence of changing tastes and consumption habits and of a rising standard of living is abundant in eighteenth-century history.

Moreover, as the new industry got on its feet, new towns appeared and grew with unprecedented speed. The heavy pressure for new dwellings and for business and industrial buildings and their equipment created demands for building materials and accessories in great variety. This aspect of the change indicates that the new industry reacted upon itself, creating new demands which the new industry could best supply; hence it went forward with increasing momentum.

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from Paul Montoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, by courtesy of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

New tastes and new demands for consumers' goods, moreover, were not confined to the town dwellers. Society was becoming more mobile, and there was a noticeable quickening of the pace with which it moved. The change came mainly from the great improvement in facilities for travel which began in the last half of the eighteenth and continued with increasing speed in the nineteenth century. Newly constructed highways which speeded up travel by coach to what some regarded as a terrifying pace and a network of canals which could be used both for passenger travel and for the transportation of goods were chiefly responsible for the new spirit of dispatch. The greater mobility of society brought many more in contact with town life and town markets, with their new and attractive merchandise. Demand for more goods and new varieties of goods was the result.

The changes described here were not peculiar to England, though in some particulars they had probably advanced further than on the Continent. One may ask, then, why the Industrial Revolution came first to England. It is not altogether easy to say, for before the great changes in agriculture and industry, England was in some respects backward. Many of the new methods in agriculture were imported from the Continent, especially from France. In the knowledge of technical processes, England lagged behind the Continent; in

CHART VII. INDICATING CHANGES IN THE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF ENGLISH SOCIETY DURING THE INTERVAL FROM 1688 TO 1769.<sup>1</sup>

	1688 <sup>2</sup>	1769 <sup>3</sup>
Agriculture	4,265,000	3,600,000
Manufacturing	240,000	3,000,000
Commerce	246,000	700,000
Military and Official		500,000
Professional		200,000
Paupers		600,000

<sup>1</sup>From John A. Hobson, *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), by courtesy of the publishers.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates of Gregory King, 1688.

<sup>3</sup>Estimates of Arthur Young, 1769.



the silk and linen textile industries and in papermaking the English were taught by the French Huguenots; in the woolen industry, by the Flemish weavers; in metallurgy, by the Dutch and the Germans. What distinguished the English, however, was the bold spirit of enterprise and the business insight displayed in utilizing the ideas of foreigners in the development of successful industries. These qualities continued to reveal themselves when the Industrial Revolution got under way. They were indeed fostered in England by a greater degree of liberty that permitted individual initiative to function more freely, for the paternalism inherent in mercantilism had never obtained so firm a grip in England as in other countries. This free play of initiative was also fostered by the earlier breaking down of the restrictive control of the guilds. The development of science was another factor in the development of the new technology; and though the spread of scientific knowledge had not been confined to England, it was in England that men most readily turned their scientific knowledge to practical account. Moreover, the English enjoyed some special advantages. Their growing population had the benefit of the largest free-trade area in Europe, a fact which meant increasing wealth to many; and much of that wealth found its way into use as industrial equipment. England, too, had natural advantages in its climate, in its numerous harbors, in its water power, and in its great resources of coal and iron.

We shall not attempt here to describe the many inventions of this period that can be ascribed to English mechanical ingenuity. A few examples will suffice to indicate the mechanical aspects of the Revolution. First in order of importance was James Watt's invention in 1769 of an improved type of the steam engine, first used in iron foundries and coal mines, and later in cotton mills. Even earlier than the appearance of Watt's invention the hand process in spinning and weaving had begun to give way before a succession of inventions. By 1774 James Hargreaves had created an ingenious multiple "spinning jenny," as it was called. Further improvements in spinning were made by Richard Arkwright and Samuel Crompton, and these finally put spinning on a power basis.



17. MAP SHOWING COAL AND IRON RESOURCES OF GREAT BRITAIN

The resulting increase in the production of thread stimulated further improvements in weaving machinery, mainly the achievement of Edmund Cartwright. One device led to another. By 1800 water and steam power had replaced hand and foot power in some branches of manufacturing. A little later, in 1814, when George Stephenson gave his locomotive its first trial, power machinery was extended to transportation. Once started, the mechanical revolution progressively gathered momentum as the nineteenth century wore on. As one new invention after another appeared, machinery invaded one new industrial field after another until by the outbreak of the World War there were few important manufactures that had not been brought under the dominant power of machines. With the birth of the Machine Age, modern capitalistic economy began.

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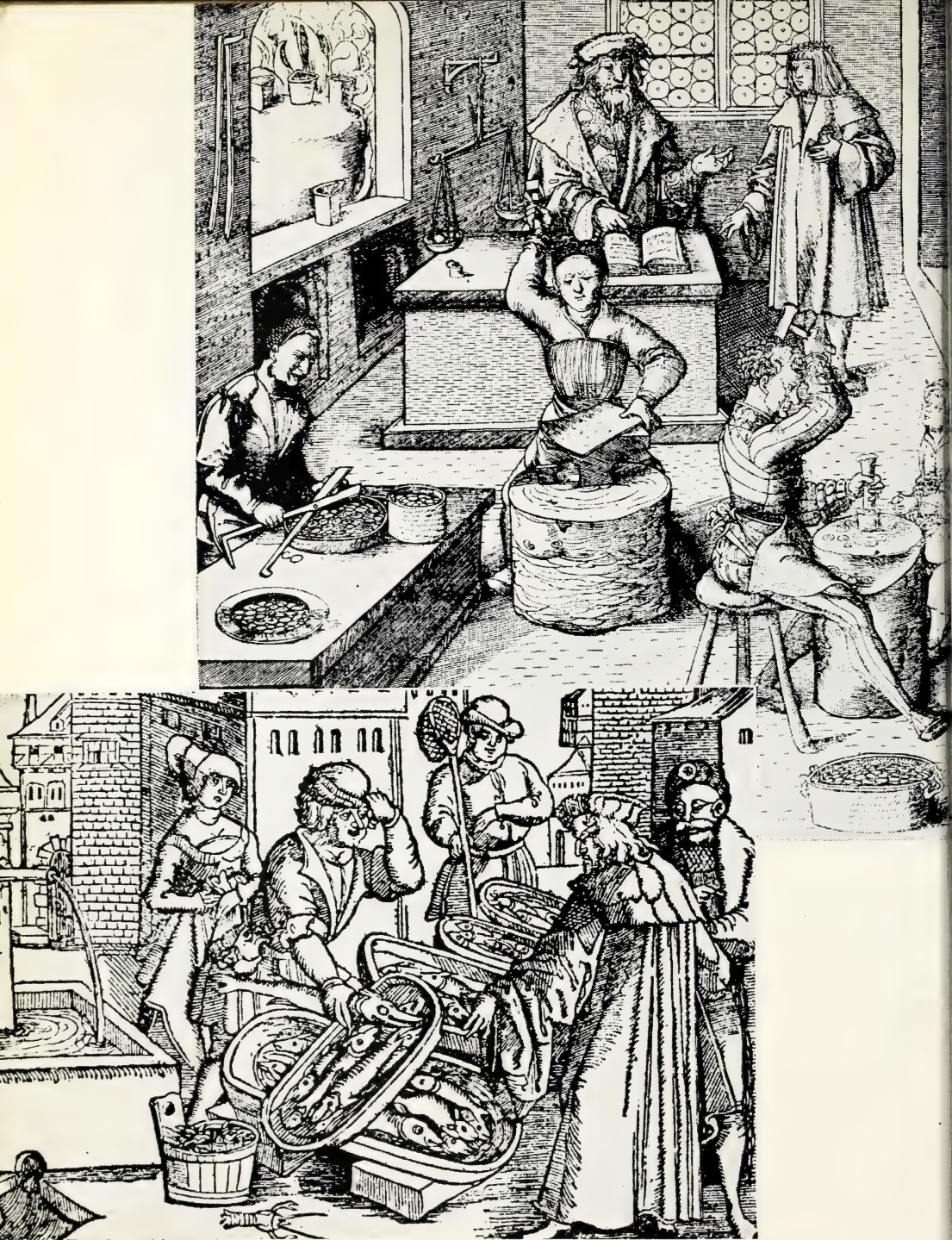
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The fairs of the Renaissance were made festival occasions, with music, dancing, singing, and great revelry. But their real purpose was to give opportunity for the sale or exchange of merchandise of all kinds. This illustration shows a view of the Great Fair at Florence. The original is an engraving by Jacques Callot, 1620. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)





The pictures on this page are of the period of the Renaissance. The upper view is the interior of a goldsmith's shop. Goldsmiths were also the first bankers, and this one is obviously discussing the condition of an account with his client. The lower picture shows a fish market set up on a street of a city, with the fishmonger respectfully acknowledging the selection a well-to-do customer has made. (Photos, courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MODERN ECONOMY

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**M**ODERN ECONOMY—or what might perhaps better be called contemporary economy—emerged in Western civilization as a result of the complex of forces set in motion by the fundamental economic changes described in the preceding chapter and by the political changes accompanying the great revolutionary and reform movements of the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first three quarters of the nineteenth century. With the establishment of modern economy came the complex economic organization familiar to us today. Modern economy cannot be understood as a mere substitution of machine production for handicraft, and of the factory for the cottage as the unit of production, and of modern farming for the semi-medieval methods of the earlier modern period. Modern economy signifies much more than these changes. It signifies the abandonment of many traditional practices, attitudes, and theories and the substitution of others in their place; it also signifies the emergence of a radically different set of social relationships. It will be the purpose of this chapter to give meaning to these generalizations.

**The complexity of modern economic life**

We might well begin with a suggestion of the wide gulf separating modern economy from the collectional stage of primitive societies. We began our study of economic life with



the statement that the end of the economic process is consumption; we produce to consume. In a primitive economic society there is little gap between the production and consumption processes; one gathers the fruit of the land and eats. But in our own advanced economic life the productive processes are long and involved. Consider, for example, the history of a package of cigarettes. It is obtained from a retailer who devotes his time to dispensing the product to the final consumer. Probably the retailer got the cigarettes from a wholesale distributor, who in turn obtained them from the manufacturer. These transactions seem simple enough; but in fact the process of turnover is a complicated one involving capital, labor, land, and management. As we move backward the process grows still more complicated; the manufacturer of the cigarettes had to secure land for building, to install considerable machinery, and to engage large numbers of laborers. Nor does the process begin here. The manufacturer is not the ultimate source of the commodity; he obtained the tobacco from dealers who in turn had obtained it from tobacco planters. The planters who raised the tobacco started their crop months before it reached the manufacturer; and before they could engage in tobacco cultivation they had to make an investment in land, in machinery, and in seed. Moreover there had to be an investment to make the implements which the planter needed. Our history is by no means complete, but it is carried far enough to indicate how complex is the process involved in supplying just one of our modern demands. In this long chain of activity no one laborer or agent employed is producing goods for his own immediate consumption. The gap between producer and consumer has been almost indefinitely widened. It is clear from this description why our modern capitalistic economy is described as a *roundabout* system of production.

So far we have been talking in terms of specific products of industry—tobacco, machinery, cigarettes; but modern economy involves more than these. The services of laborers and skilled workers give rise to labor problems. The transportation of goods brings up the problem of government control of railroads and public utilities. The profits of the manufacturer,

when they are excessive, give rise to problems touching the unequal distribution of wealth. Again, the government usually insists on a share of the proceeds of business; here emerges the question of taxation. The use of mediums of exchange—money and credit—necessitates a banking system. The sale of goods abroad creates problems of international trade. These wide ramifications of modern economy require the complicated social machinery—institutions and various social mechanisms—which is characteristic of contemporary civilization.

### **The progress of machine production**

The complex organization outlined above did not come into existence overnight. It grew up during the nineteenth century. The rather halting progress of the Industrial Revolution was mentioned in the preceding chapter. From the early years of the eighteenth century rudely constructed engines were used in England to pump water out of mines. In manufacturing, machinery was first used in making cotton yarn, then cotton cloth. Later, machines invaded the woolen industry, then entered the silk and linen fields. By 1840 machinery was dominant in the manufacture of cloth. The introduction of machinery in the textile industries was encouraged by reason of the relatively small amount of capital required. Necessary equipment was inexpensive; and sheds, old barns, and other buildings already in existence were utilized for the first mills. Then too, textiles afforded wide opportunities for specialization, so that the dangers of early competition could be largely avoided. The first textile mills were usually small establishments owned and managed by one man or by a simple partnership, but the rapid growth of some was noticeable early in the nineteenth century. While most of them employed fewer than fifty workers, three cotton spinning mills employed 1500 to 1600 each in 1816; and by 1830 there was one woolen mill employing 1100 workers. Before 1850 machinery was of chief importance in the production of engines and machinery, iron goods, glass, and paper. The use of machinery in the leather industries was delayed; not until 1860 were shoes made by machines.

This incomplete account suggests that the battle between machinery and hand labor has been long drawn out. Resistance to the march of machinery is to be explained in several ways. In some cases engineering knowledge and skill were not yet sufficient to create machines adaptable to certain kinds of production; in others the margin of advantage of machinery over handicraft was not sufficient to make machines profitable; in still other lines the market was not wide enough to tempt investments in machinery; and, finally, the demand for some kinds of handmade goods, permitting greater expression of individual taste, has kept machines at a distance. Some of these considerations, particularly the last-mentioned, continue to operate today. In all industrial countries thousands still make a living by hand labor in the production of commodities. It is to be noted, too, that the factory does not always follow the machine. Many machines are adapted to use in the home or in small shops.

### FROM MERCANTILISM TO INDIVIDUALISM

Long before the close of the eighteenth century the new business classes that emerged with the economic revolution began to exert pressure upon government to obtain concessions. The new industry appeared to be capable of producing unending wealth if the masters of the land and the masters of the machines could enjoy freedom of enterprise—if government would forsake its traditional policy of interfering in the economic affairs of society. In the rosy light of this promise of a new age of plenty, leaders of industry and leaders in the new agriculture were looked upon as rising benefactors of English society, and government began a piecemeal process of destroying the structure of the mercantile system.

#### The passing of mercantilism

Thus the displacement of state regulation by an individualist, competitive system was one of the major changes in economic life following the Industrial Revolution. It will be



recalled that the eighteenth-century philosophers began a determined attack upon mercantilism. But it was not theories that destroyed mercantilism in England; it was rather the new conditions of life introduced by the mechanical revolution, conditions that led men of action to support the theorists in a successful movement against state regulation. With the development of the new industrial life, mercantilism, which had once been regarded as a blessing, now appeared to the aggressive members of society as an unnecessary restriction. "Just as the guild system had originally been a spur to industry, but had ultimately become a drag on it, so the mercantile system of regulation changed from a boon to a drawback."<sup>1</sup> The regulations suitable to one economic period had become obsolete in the light of new conditions. Adam Smith reasoned that welfare was conditioned on complete freedom in internal industry and external trade. Under mercantilism, it was contended, government had regulated the economic life of society in the interest of a small minority. What the new business class desired was equality of opportunity. The machine had put instruments in their hands to gain untold wealth, but they must be free to exploit the machine. Regulation under the mercantilist system stifled individual initiative, shackled enterprise, and discouraged the utilization of man's energy and ingenuity in the production of wealth. Economic freedom was the supreme need of the times.

How seriously mercantilism was opposed to the interests of the new industrialists becomes apparent when we consider their needs. The new machine industry demanded a free and ample labor market in which the competition for jobs would keep down wages in factory, mill, and mine; but the old Statute of Apprentices, though often ignored at this time, to be sure, was still on the books, and in direct conflict with the demand by reason of its requirement of a long period of training not needed by workers in a factory. Again, in the interest of keeping down cost of production it was desirable that the price of food for the workers be low; but mercantilism had created

<sup>1</sup>E. R. A. Seligman, *Principles of Economics* (Longmans, Green and Company, sixth edition, 1914), p. 119.

the Corn Laws as a means of keeping up the price of home-grown grain, thus placing a high monopoly price upon bread. In like fashion, import duties increased the cost of raw materials indispensable in the manufacture of goods. And finally, machine production created surpluses of manufactured goods far in excess of the consuming power of the home market. Foreign markets were a necessity, but mercantilism hindered international commerce throughout the Western world. It was quite evident that industrial society was confronted by conditions not contemplated by the old order.

To meet the new situation there was at hand the arsenal of ideas created by Adam Smith and other eighteenth-century thinkers. In the laissez-faire doctrine was found not only a basis for the onslaught on state regulation, but also a theoretical approach to the building of a new economic order. Laissez faire assumes that the maximum of social welfare is to be derived from a minimum of governmental interference, and that each individual understands best his own wishes and will come nearer to their realization through his own initiative than through the agency of collective action. Adam Smith stated the case for laissez faire in his epochal work, *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, in words which have become the classic expression of that philosophy:

All systems, either of preference or restraint, . . . being taken away, the obvious and simple system of natural liberty establishes itself of its own accord. Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest in his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man or order of men. . . . According to the system of natural liberty the sovereign has only three duties to attend to: . . . first, the duty of protecting the society from the violence and invasion of other independent societies; secondly, the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the advantage of any individual or small number of individuals to erect and maintain because the profit could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society.

### The adoption of individualism

The revolutionary ideas of Adam Smith did not immediately capture the imagination of English society. It required years of argument in pamphlets and on the platform before the individualist theory was accepted in anything like complete form. Manufacturers and landlords—like men of affairs in all ages—were disposed to accept from Adam Smith and other economists of their time only those aspects of their doctrine which in the light of what was accepted as hard common sense appeared to be consistent with the interests of agriculture and industry. Moreover, they took the liberty of interpreting the theories of the new political economy in their own way. At times landlords and manufacturers saw fit to pull together; frequently, however, their interests clashed. This situation largely explains the tardiness with which some features of individualism were translated into government policy. Generally speaking, manufacturers and landlords recognized the advantage of *laissez faire* as a theory designed to give them complete freedom in the use of their property and the treatment of their workers. Hence the policy of nonintervention by government in this field of operations gained early recognition. But manufacturers, notwithstanding the advantage of lower production costs afforded by England's temporary monopoly of machinery, at first opposed free trade because they wished to retain their monopoly of the home market. On the other hand, the removal of the protection afforded to the farmers by the Corn Laws would be an advantage to the manufacturers since it would bring down the high cost of bread to the working population and thereby obviate the necessity of high wages. But landlords, for obvious reasons, desired to maintain the high prices of wheat and consequently fought desperately to defend the Corn Laws against the attacks of the manufacturing interests. So it came about that free trade lagged behind other features of *laissez faire* as a policy of British government.

During the 1840's, however, the supporters of free trade, under the leadership of Sir Robert Peel, were able to put



through a succession of budgets which abolished the Corn Laws and which wiped off the statute books hundreds of regulations and tariffs which had accumulated over past centuries. The work of Peel was virtually completed by Gladstone during the 1860's. The achievement was a turning point in the history of Great Britain. Mercantilism was dead, and laissez faire and free trade had become a fact in English life. The far-reaching character of the change is indicated in the words of Professor Seligman:

The demand for freedom of industry no longer meant freedom from the action of local government, but freedom from the action of national government as well; the demand for freedom of trade no longer meant liberty of export, but liberty of import as well. . . . Instead of a national exclusiveness, economists demanded cosmopolitan freedom.<sup>1</sup>

The economic order which emerged after the downfall of mercantilism, first in Great Britain and later in modified form in most of the Western world, persisted in its central features down to the World War. True, other countries did not go so far as Great Britain in the adoption of free trade; in fact, they pretty generally reverted to the protectionist principle before the close of the nineteenth century, but all maintained, so far as circumstances would permit, the policy of nonintervention in economic life. The qualification—so far as circumstances would permit—is necessary; for as we have seen, the last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed a reaction against laissez faire, and government did intervene in social and economic affairs to a considerable degree. Even so, down to the postwar period individualism and competition remained as the working hypothesis in the economic life of modern industrial society. Since the World War rising dictatorships have largely put an end to individualism in a number of countries.

As we shall see later in this discussion, the overthrow of mercantilism had an important influence in creating a reaction against imperialism.

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<sup>1</sup>Seligman, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

### THE CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM

We are now in a position to survey the modern economic order. It is commonly referred to as the capitalistic system by reason of the dominant role of capital in its operations. Capitalism was not, however, a product of the Industrial Revolution, although the revolution augmented the need of capital manifold. In modern times the increasing importance of capital in economic activity can be traced back to the sixteenth century; the Industrial Revolution carried capitalism to a climax. Nevertheless, the enormous sums required in modern industry give to the word "capitalistic," as applied to modern economy, a significance which it did not hold in all preceding history.

Modern economy embraces so vast a field that we cannot hope to do more than describe briefly some of its essential characteristics and indicate its significance in modern civilization. One of its essential features is the factory system.

#### The factory system

Factories existed in England before the Industrial Revolution, but they were in no sense typical of the economic organization of that period. With the coming of the machine age the factory met the new requirements so completely in most cases as to make it the logical and typical institution of the modern economic order. Thus it became the unit of production in the new industrial system—an organized group of wage-workers controlling power-driven machines under the direction, at first, of the factory owner and his aids, but later of salaried officials, technical experts, and foremen organized into highly specialized managerial and administrative departments. With the progress of time the factory has developed into an instrument of giant power for the production of goods, and large-scale production has become a characteristic of the industrial system. In earlier times even a wage earner could hope, by frugal living, to save enough to go into business for himself, at least on a small scale. But now he realizes the hopelessness of trying to compete with the large business cor-

porations whose very size places the would-be small producer at a disadvantage. And so today the small business establishments that were prevalent in the earlier development of the Industrial Revolution are seldom found: they were forced either to suspend or to be absorbed into larger units. Our economic processes have become more and more capitalistic—that is, they involve larger and larger amounts of instrumental capital.

Large-scale production under the corporate form of organization affords a number of advantages which need not be discussed here. For present purposes the economic fact to be emphasized is that in manufacture the larger the output becomes under one management, the lower goes the cost of production per unit. Consequently the large-scale producer possesses a vital advantage over his small-scale competitor in the scramble for markets. We may have sympathy for the little man who must give up his business, but we buy where we see advantage to ourselves; our own interest has helped to foster the gigantic corporations.

The development of large-scale productive units has meant a tremendous increase in the total productive capacity of society. Slichter gives us a concrete illustration of the rapid increase in productive power during the machine age:

A hundred years ago, a skilled workman could make about thirty needles in a day. Now a semi-skilled girl with the aid of a machine makes 500,000 in the same time. On the Great Lakes, ore vessels are loaded with 10,000 tons of ore in twenty minutes and unloaded in a little more than three hours. One can conjecture how long a gang of laborers would require to perform these operations by hand. It is estimated that the entire population of the world would be needed to produce by hand methods the amount of cotton cloth which is turned out by 1,500,000 workers using machinery.<sup>1</sup>

The social significance of this increased productive power cannot be overestimated. Not only has it made possible the support of enormously increased populations in the last century and a half, but it has actually raised the average standard

<sup>1</sup>Sumner H. Slichter, *Modern Economic Society* (Henry Holt and Company, 1931), p. 89.



of living wherever industrial development has taken place. The reason for this is obvious, for the total production constitutes the income of society, and the greater the production the more there is to go round. The standard of living is higher today than it was in medieval times, despite vastly denser populations, only because it can be higher; and it can be higher because we have mastered the technique of creating goods in abundance. One needs only to observe a country like China, where productive methods are still largely primitive. There the total annual output is so low that the Chinese masses are in poverty. And they will continue to live in poverty until machinery and knowledge supplement mere human physical effort.

The increased production of goods and services following the Industrial Revolution has transformed modern life to a degree little realized. The rank and file of people of the contemporary Western world have a richer life in material things than had the aristocracy of the Middle Ages. The average person has more food and a greater variety of food, more clothes and a far greater variety of clothes than the most optimistic Utopian of the early eighteenth century could foresee. For our homes there are central furnaces replacing the fireplaces of yesterday, gas and electric cooking ranges instead of the open fire, rugs where there used to be bare floors, electric lights in place of candles. For travel, the modern automobile, train, and airplane supplant the stagecoach and the wagon of yesterday. For communication of ideas there are now the telephone, telegraph, newspapers, and radios; and to all these television is now being added. We may still enjoy the forms of entertainment of the "good old days" if we wish, but to all of them science and invention have added phonographs, radios, and the cinema theater. The average person receives much, and for what he receives he labors less. Toil from dawn to dusk is no longer the lot of the typical farmer; nowadays, throughout most of the Western world the farmer has his hours of leisure. His cousin in the city, the typical factory worker, labors six, eight (rarely more than eight) hours and not, as of yesterday, twelve, fourteen,

and sixteen hours a day. We are not suggesting that we have reached a golden age. There is still far too little shelter, food, clothing, and entertainment for millions in modern society. The point we are attempting to emphasize is that the prodigious increase in goods and services available to the average man makes him in historical perspective a rich person. As to how far this achievement falls short of meeting the legitimate demands of contemporary society something will be said in the chapter following.

### **The role of finance capital**

Finance capital is another essential and characteristic feature of the capitalistic system. Allusion to its importance has already been made. So indispensable is capital to the successful working of modern economy that the modern banking system has come to be one of the most powerful institutions of our time.

It used to be true that a man produced goods and then consumed the products of his labor, or exchanged them for other goods. Nowadays a factory worker or a farmer does not ordinarily consume his own production or even exchange it for other commodities. Instead, goods produced are exchanged for money, and this money is ultimately used as the purchasing power for other goods. Thus money has become a medium of exchange. Not that all business is done with hand-to-hand money; about nine-tenths of current business is carried on through credit. An elaborate money and credit system requires a banking system. And so banking has come to be a typical feature of the modern economic world.

At first banking consisted principally in the safekeeping of money for depositors who had no immediate use for it. Now banking performs a highly specialized social function—that of facilitating production. In our present industrial scheme banks are, in reality, instruments for bringing together the borrower and the lender of capital. The lender is the man who deposits money in the bank; the borrower is the one who secures a loan at the bank. The bank is the medium through which a large number of small deposits—each ineffective in

itself in this age of large-scale production—is translated, by the way of loans to producers, into large amounts of capital that can be utilized for the building of factories, for the purchase of raw material, and for the payment of wages. Thus the bank has become not an end in itself, but a means—a means for increasing the instrumental capital of society. The test of a good banking system today, therefore, is not that it provides a safe place to put money, but that it serves to facilitate the production of goods and services. Goods and services are not produced, it is true, by money, but by agents of production—land, labor, and capital; the function of the bank is to provide the mechanism whereby monetary purchasing power is turned over to those individuals or groups who can best utilize the agents of production obtainable with this purchasing power. Thus, the indispensable needs of modern business have made banks lenders of purchasing power, dispensers, that is to say, of credit. Since the Industrial Revolution there has been a constant widening of the spread of time between the beginnings of production of a commodity and its sale to the final consumer. Hence credit has become a vital part of production; and with every increase in the demand for credit, there has been a corresponding increase in the function the bank plays in our economic scheme.

### **Individualism and the competitive system**

A third essential characteristic of the capitalistic system is individualism. We have seen how the acceptance of the *laissez-faire* doctrine as an economic principle accompanied the development of the modern industrial system. It was accepted as the best answer to the question as to how the nation might achieve prosperity. Its acceptance as a working principle grew logically—and perhaps we may say inevitably—out of the novel conditions following the economic revolution. The modern capitalistic system is so intimately bound up with economic individualism that the one is usually thought of today as indissolubly bound up with the other. Obviously, this is not to say that the capitalistic system cannot endure a degree of state intervention; history shows that it has been able to exist



under a considerable degree of state intervention. In other words, the capitalistic system and collectivism can live together, even though the captains of industry and finance may protest that they are being unduly hampered in their pursuit of profits. But it is also obviously true that if the state passes from regulation to ownership and operation on a wide scale the capitalistic system as we now understand it will pass away and we shall have some form of socialism. How far may state intervention go without destroying the existing economic order? How far, for example, can a capitalistic state engage in comprehensive economic planning? This nice question is discussed in the next chapter.

The preceding paragraph will explain why the modern industrial system is sometimes described as an individualist system. As an individualist system it embraces competition as an essential, stimulating force in economic activity. Large-scale production is a characteristic of modern industry whether we speak of a factory, a mill, a transportation corporation, or a public utility. Since each and all are products of individualist enterprise, they comprise, in theory at least, a world of competing units; hence we speak of modern industry as competitive. Each producer is concerned not only with the problem of turning out goods, but with the more difficult one of selling them. The sale of his goods presupposes a price equal to, or lower than, that of his competitors; otherwise he fails to capture his share of the market. This eager, and even grasping, hunt for customers has both beneficial and evil effects. It is good in so far as it imposes on the businessman the necessity for efficiency and the elimination of waste as a means of keeping the price of his goods within the range set by his competitors. Thus competition tends to insure to the buyers a price that is not far from the real cost of production. But it is an evil in so far as the everlasting pressure on the businessman to keep his price low leads him to exact from his workers a working day so strenuous as to result in nervous strain and other ill effects to their health. This situation gives rise to an important social problem—the effect of modern industry upon the worker, a topic to be treated later.

**International trade under the capitalistic system**

International commerce as we know it today is a fourth characteristic of the capitalistic system. It is true, of course, that international trade existed before the establishment of the modern economic order; and it is true that international trade will continue if and when the capitalistic system is destroyed everywhere. Nevertheless, modern world trade is a product of the Industrial Revolution, and in a special sense it is a product of the capitalistic system. That system could not exist—certainly in its present form—without foreign outlets for its surplus production as well as foreign sources of indispensable materials. If capitalism is sick today—and no one can deny that it is—one of the chief sources of its ailment is the striking reduction in world trade in recent years, reduction produced in part by national policies that have set up artificial bars to free commercial intercourse among the nations of the world.

In the pages following we shall attempt to make clear the effect of the Industrial Revolution on world trade and the intimate relationship existing between world trade and the capitalistic system.

*The second commercial revolution.* The expansion of commerce after the Industrial Revolution was so impressive and so different from what had gone before that it is sometimes referred to as the second commercial revolution. Unlike that of the sixteenth century,<sup>1</sup> the second commercial revolution was not attended by the discovery of new continents, or the finding of new oceans; but it was marked by the laying out of new ocean lanes leading to many new communities untouched, or all but untouched, in the centuries before the Industrial Revolution. It also introduced a technique of exchange as revolutionary in its departure from that which preceded it as is the modern ocean steamship from the ancient sailing vessel. With increased production of surplus goods, with new markets, with improvements in methods of exchange, the tonnage of ocean-going trade grew to almost unbelievable figures. In the

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 482 ff.

beginning of the nineteenth century the total foreign commerce of the world amounted to \$1,400,000,000, while its per capita value was \$2.31. By 1850 it amounted to \$4,000,000,000, with a per capita value of \$3.76. In 1913 it amounted to \$40,000,000,000, with a per capita value of \$22.47.

The Industrial Revolution had made possible the surplus stocks which entered into the enormous trade between the countries of the world. But if applied science and mechanical ingenuity had not provided improved methods of transportation and communication, the surpluses of production would have been wasted, and the full fruits of the Industrial Revolution would never have been realized. It was necessary that a revolution in transportation should supplement the revolution in the technique of production. The United States offers a concrete example of this fact. Here in our Middle Western states the wide expanses of virgin soil and the invention of farming machinery before and after the Civil War provided conditions most favorable for agriculture on a large scale and for the production of a surplus of foodstuffs, but except for those communities on or near large rivers, outside markets were not available until canals and railroads were built. When the American farmer finally could rely on modern rail and water transportation, he found himself able, in the seventies, to lay down his wheat in Liverpool at a lower price than the English farmer could meet. The result was the expansion of American grain production.

Thus the revolution in the means of production and the revolution in facilities of transportation and communication have worked together to produce a transformation in international commerce. Modern methods of production mean low-cost production, and modern methods of transportation mean low-cost transportation; the two acting together make international trade feasible and profitable on a large scale. The reciprocal nature of these forces suggests a certain sequence—first, greater production; second, the necessity for world markets in which to dispose of the products; third, the impetus consequently given to the development of transportation facilities. (See Map 16.)



This sequence suggests the truth of the statement made above, namely, that in a special sense foreign trade is an essential characteristic of the capitalistic system. Its special role in modern industry becomes clear when we contrast the nineteenth century with the earlier modern period. It will be recalled that during the handicraft stage production was almost entirely absorbed by local consumption. Only a few specialties were surpluses produced for foreign consumption. The bulk of foreign trade was in raw materials. But with the introduction of machinery the situation was radically changed. So great was the production in an increasing number of lines that neither the immediate locality nor the nation itself could absorb it. Hence foreign outlets had to be found if industry was not to be stifled by its own surplus. Moreover, with the development of mammoth industrial corporations, low-cost mass production became a characteristic feature of industry. In many cases the margin of profit was dependent on sales abroad; without foreign markets these concerns found themselves in financial difficulties. Modern large-scale farming is in the same position. For example, American wheat and cotton enter a state of depression when deprived of extensive foreign outlets, and when a depression overtakes forms of production as fundamental as those mentioned the whole economic structure feels the impact. It may be mentioned in passing that this dependence on foreign markets both in agriculture and in industry is an important factor in recurring depressions. When for any reason export trade dries up, the industries affected begin to lay off workers and a series of causes and effects that depress the whole nation may be set in motion. These facts demonstrate the intimate relation between the modern industrial system and international trade.

### **Spread of the capitalistic system**

The system which we have attempted to characterize in the preceding pages developed first in England. Since it was there that the Industrial Revolution began, Great Britain became the first great industrial country in history. Despite

early attempts made by the British to prevent secrets of industrial processes from falling into the hands of manufacturers in other countries, these secrets soon spread from one nation to another as each became ripe for industrialization. By the middle of the nineteenth century the technical revolution was well on its way in France, Belgium, and the United States. With the establishment of the German Empire (1871), the shift from handicrafts to machine industry began decisively in that country; and Italian unification (1859-1871) gave an impulse to the movement in Italy. Toward the close of the century, the imperial government of Russia devoted itself to the difficult task of introducing machinery into that agricultural country—a task taken up again, after the Revolution of 1917, by the Communist government.

Although the extent of industrialization differed from country to country, and although there were other observable differences, the essential outline of the capitalistic pattern was followed in all. But after the World War revolutionary political and social changes upset the capitalistic system in some countries. In Russia, for example, it has been completely swept away so far as its individualist features are concerned. In the other dictatorships state control has been extended to an extreme degree, but apparently under a governmental policy designed to preserve as much private ownership and private initiative in economic life as the basic aims of the state will permit. But in all these cases the national economy shows wide deviations in certain particulars from the capitalistic type that we have characterized above.

### WORLD ECONOMY

In the opening chapter dealing with the development of economic institutions the successive types of economy were passed in review, from the collectional stage to world economy. We are now in a position to examine more in detail the character of this latest stage and to understand the forces which created it.

The development of world economy was a direct result of the

second commercial revolution; the remarkable expansion of world trade led inevitably to further progress in the economic integration of society. The comparative insignificance of commerce during the early Middle Ages was a sign and an explanation of the narrow and niggardly local economy of that period. The rise of national economy after the Commercial Revolution of the sixteenth century signified a great increase in international trade, or trade between the European nations and their colonial possessions. But it remained for the Industrial Revolution to open every corner of the globe to the exchange of commodities, so that every community that possessed the means was in a position to share in the rich economic heritage of the entire world. In other words, the Industrial Revolution has tended to make national economy obsolete, and to bind society into a world economy.

#### **Interdependence of nations**

Today we are confronted with the impressive fact of the interdependence of nations. Economically speaking, practically the entire world community is bound together as a unit. No nation, if it would not impoverish the life of its people, can live unto itself. The economic interests of society have become so intertwined by our complicated commercial and financial systems that a serious hurt to the economic life of one nation materially affects the lives of people in other nations. One nation can never again afford to be indifferent to what is happening in other parts of the world society. Allusion was made above to extensive deliveries of American wheat in the markets of Liverpool in the seventies at prices so low that British farmers were unable to compete. Should England create new Corn Laws and thus raise the cost of food to the people, or should she permit the decline of English agriculture, now no longer able to compete in the world market? England chose not to lay a tax on food, and British agriculture did in fact decline. What was happening on the wheat farms of Canada, Minnesota, and the Dakotas contributed to important changes in the economic life of the British Isles. As a highly industrialized and commercial nation, England chose to sacri-



face her own agriculture and leave the feeding of her population in large measure to those countries that could produce lower-priced food. To a large extent England now depends on the outside world to feed her.

Numerous similar illustrations of the economic interdependence of nations could be cited. The cutting off of the supply of American cotton to England during the American Civil War brought widespread distress to the thousands of workers in the cotton mills of Lancashire. Stagnation in the English cotton mills affects seriously the prosperity of our Southern planters. A failure of the Brazilian coffee crop may raise the price of a cup of coffee in the American home. When European countries decide to become agriculturally self-sufficient and therefore discontinue purchasing from American farmers, prices of American farm products fall drastically.

So we might continue; but enough has been said to indicate that, in an economic sense, the world has become like a living body in which the nations function somewhat as organic parts contributing to sustain the economic health of the whole. And within the body the numberless lines of commercial and financial contact are like nerves, communicating in some manner conditions of health or injury in one part to the health or injury of the whole body.

*Geographic specialization.* Of the many forces contributing to the economic interdependence of nations—to a world economy—one of the most potent is geographic specialization. The distribution of natural resources has given to one community or another an advantage over the rest of the world in some specialized line of economic activity. Here it is an abundance of coal and iron favoring the low cost of steel production; there an abundance of oil, or copper, or tin, or chromium, or potash, or platinum, or antimony, or nitrates, or manganese; in other areas a soil and climate peculiarly suited to the production of cotton, or tea, or coffee, or rubber, or olive oil, or hemp, or sugar. But in spite of these natural advantages to be found in different parts of the world, geographic specialization in production on a large scale would be impossible without world markets: Britain cannot begin to

consume profitably all its steel, the United States its cotton, Chile its nitrates, Brazil its coffee. Moreover, geographic specialization depends on such improvements in the means of transportation as will so lower the cost of shipping that transportation charges do not offset the advantages inherent in a lower cost of production. When world markets do exist, and when the cost of shipping is reduced to a minimum, geographic specialization becomes a big factor in world commerce, with a consequent advantage, not merely to the local community, but to the world at large. For as markets are expanded the trend toward large-scale production becomes more pronounced; mass production permits the full utilization of machinery and a maximum degree of division of labor; this results in a lower cost of production per unit, and a consequent lowering of consumer's cost—which last, in its turn, encourages greater production—if other factors remain unchanged. Thus geographic specialization, world markets, and large-scale production act and react on one another, and when unobstructed result in economic gain to society.

*Mobility of capital.* Another factor in world interdependence is the mobility of capital. Capital tends to flow where it has the prospect of the most lucrative return. As proof of this it may be noted that the capital which made possible the industrial expansion of the United States after the Civil War was mainly borrowed from England. From the point of view of the individual English businessman, he merely bought bonds of American corporations. From the international point of view, capital flowed from England to the United States. This new country, with its abundance of natural resources, offered the opportunity for the profitable investment of capital; since the World War, we, on the other hand, have found other countries which are, or seem to be, profitable fields for business ventures. These many enterprises become international in character: banks make international loans; German manufacturers set up factories in the United States for the making of rayon silk products; Henry Ford erects automobile plants in Canada and in Europe; British armament-makers introduce establishments in various parts of the world. The significance

of this kind of international business enterprise for world interdependence is clear. When business crosses national frontiers in this fashion it creates economic ties with other countries and links up in some measure the interests of one with the interests of others.

### THE REVIVAL OF IMPERIALISM

The preceding description of the world economy suggests a picture of a world society in which the nations accept the fact of economic interdependence and pursue policies permitting the free development of regional specialization over the globe as best calculated to promote the general welfare on a basis of live and let live. It is clear that such an ideal could be realized only under a considerable degree of freedom in commercial intercourse among the nations. The middle decades of the nineteenth century appeared fairly promising of such a development. The early English exponents of *laissez faire* envisaged a thoroughgoing world economy. Their hope for the future was the creation of a free-trade world permitting the unobstructed movement of goods, raw materials, and capital in accordance with the "natural" laws of supply and demand.

Whatever hope there may have been for the realization of a free-trade world was dashed during the last quarter of the nineteenth century by the rise of two powerful forces. One was the intensification of nationalism; the other was the economic demands of machine industry. When these forces combined, economic nationalism emerged with a driving power that progressively altered the international aspects of modern economy. The result was that the industrial nations, one after another, turned their backs upon free trade and returned to tariff walls and imperialism. The change has created a complicated picture. For more than a half century world society has been living under a world economy, but within the world economy imperialist policies have everywhere been building obstructions interfering with the free operation of economic forces. The political world is distinctly out of step with the economic world.

We wish now to pick up the thread in the development of



imperialism where we dropped it during the discussion of the period of colonial expansion under mercantilism.<sup>1</sup> We have already witnessed the abandonment of mercantile theories in England after the Industrial Revolution. How did their abandonment affect the attitude toward colonial expansion—imperialism—which was an integral part of mercantilist economy?

### The revolt against the old colonialism

In the eighteenth century, when the long period during which mercantilism dictated the policies of the dynastic states was drawing to a close, certain English observers began to raise doubts as to the validity of mercantilist economy, and made public their ideas in a succession of pamphlets. In one of the best-known of these, Josiah Tucker declared "If this defeat [the defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown] should terminate in a total separation from America, it would be one of the happiest events that ever happened to Great Britain." In his great work *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith attacked the colonial theory as one of the numerous fallacies of mercantilism. "All the European colonies," he wrote, "have, without exception, been a cause of weakness rather than of strength to their respective countries. . . . Great Britain derives nothing but loss from the dominion which she has assumed over her colonies." Then, as if to bear out his theories in the world of facts, came the early commercial results of the American Revolution, which appeared to offer a direct contradiction to mercantilist reasoning, for, once the Americans had set their house in order, their growing prosperity was reflected in an expanding commerce with England. The colonies free were proving better customers than they had been as British possessions held in check commercially by a monopolistic policy. Meanwhile, over on the Continent the French economists were already busy spreading the gospel of *laissez faire*. Then came the Industrial Revolution, with its devastating affect upon British mercantilism.

How did the new economic doctrine of *laissez faire* and free

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 486-487.

trade square with the Old Imperialism? The new economists reasoned in this fashion: Since *laissez faire* was the undoubted way to individual wealth and, by counting individual fortunes, also the way to national wealth, all shackles upon the economic freedom of colonies should be struck off. And if the colonies of Britain and, it was hoped, the colonies of all other countries were thrown open to free trade, what was the point in holding them? They were an endless source of expense; armies and navies had to be maintained to hold them; their administration was also costly. The logic of the situation argued that colonies be given independence as soon as they were able to stand on their own legs; and they should become free with Britain's blessing upon them, as having performed an act quite as beneficial to the mother country as to themselves. Thus armies and navies could be cut down and other colonial expenses saved, so that presently there would be large revenues available for the building of a better and happier society at home; and war, the destroyer of wealth, would become a thing of the past, for, under free trade, nations would not have to fight for commerce and empire. So reasoned the advocates of *laissez faire*. In a free-trade world, they expected that the old notion of the desirability of an exclusive, monopolistic, national economy would give way to an unobstructed world economy in which all might freely buy where prices were lowest and sell where they were highest.

As already observed, it looked for a time as if these expectations might be realized. Britain was completely successful, as we have seen, in the inauguration of a free-trade policy, which she extended to her colonial possessions; she was successful to a degree in persuading Continental countries to follow her example, although in none of them was free trade established as a complete system. In England lists were drawn up of colonies which, as some argued, should be given their independence at once. None were actually set adrift, but the accepted opinion was that it was only a matter of time before British colonies would mature and withdraw from the Empire—and to the good of England. In the fifties, Europe appeared to be convinced of the folly of further aggressive imperialism. But less

than two decades later articles and books began to appear indicating that the tide was setting in against indifference to empire, and before long a positive sentiment arose favorable to the imperial expansion. How is the about-face to be explained?

To understand this reversal in national policies we must regard imperialism not as an incidental appendage to capitalistic economy but as a definitely related feature of it. In the light of ideas and dogmas accepted by the industrialists and financiers and by their governments, imperialism was a logical and inevitable outgrowth of modern economy—of modern economy operating in a world of intensely nationalistic states. Let us turn to Europe and notice how national developments were turning the governments and the business classes away from Great Britain's lead in free trade and toward protection and imperialism.

### **Why European businessmen wanted colonies**

No large country can support a dense population upon an agricultural basis unless it is willing to accept a low standard of living. One of the most astonishing facts of nineteenth-century history is the phenomenal increase of population. From 1800 to 1900, Great Britain increased from some 16,000,000 to over 40,000,000; Germany from 21,000,000 to over 56,000,000; Italy from 18,000,000 to more than 32,000,000; Austria-Hungary from 23,000,000 to 45,000,000; European Russia from nearly 39,000,000 to over 111,000,000; the whole of Europe from 180,000,000 to 450,000,000 (in 1910). Conditions were favorable for industrialization. Money lent by Britain to states on the Continent was being put into railroads, public works, and industrial plants. The revolution in industry was in motion in those countries and in others. How would the financiers and business classes generally react to these changed conditions, and what was to be the attitude of their governments?

In such countries as Germany, France, and Belgium, private business immediately embraced the opportunities for rich rewards by turning to machinery. But there were obsta-



cles to overcome. Infant industries could hardly hope to compete with the old, established industries of Britain; free trade was, for them, a serious disadvantage; they required protection. Moreover, these countries lacked the necessary raw materials. They were unwilling to depend on competing nations for the supply; prices would be high and supplies precarious under abnormal conditions, as, for example, during a period of war. They must likewise have foreign markets, they argued. Britain had established a large measure of control over the markets of the world; to buy from Britain had become a tradition; besides, there were ominous signs that the free-trade era was drawing to a close; the bars were already going up against foreign trade in the decades following 1870. Lastly, there was accumulating, with the advance of industrial enterprise, surplus capital, which presently could not hope for high returns if invested in the home country. The logic of the whole situation, as the great business interests saw it, demanded that the state come to their rescue, that it intervene in their behalf. What they desired from the state was protective tariffs at home, and colonies abroad to furnish raw materials, markets, and places for profitable investment. In other words, they demanded imperialism. Thus the industrial change which drove Britain against imperialism was, under the altered conditions existing in other countries, driving opinion toward its vigorous support.

#### **Why governments supported the businessmen**

How would this program of the businessmen appeal to governments—that is, to presidents, premiers, cabinets, and parliaments—or to kings and emperors? In the industrial countries governments were won over—in Germany, France, Belgium, Russia, Italy, and finally in the United States. Conditions were not quite the same in all of them, and the considerations which weighed most were not always the same; but we can explain the support given to the business and financial interests in fairly general terms.

Business classes were, of course, interested in profits. Government officials and politicians soon found that business

interests ran parallel with certain vital interests of state, and that in supporting business, government appeared to be safeguarding its own interests. Hence, there arose a tacit partnership between government and big business, and the industrial states turned to a policy of imperialism.

It will be recalled that the bourgeois governments in Europe reach back no further than approximately the decade of the eighteen-seventies; that is to say, the middle class had only recently come into power. Bourgeois governments are infants, historically speaking; and they came into existence only after a terrific and prolonged struggle with the aristocratic power that preceded them. They had no sooner triumphed over their traditional enemy than they found themselves confronted by the working classes from below who, having become indoctrinated with the ideas of socialism, were opposed to capitalism, and, by that token, to the bourgeois class and the bourgeois governments. Under the circumstances the bourgeois governments had no reason to feel overly secure. Their hope lay in the creation of a broad political base to rest upon; a broad political base might presumably be created if socialism could be undermined by jobs for the jobless and good wages and good working conditions for all. With populations growing rapidly, such a program was not easy of realization. Industry expanded and intensified to yield even greater production appeared to be a possible solution. That was precisely what the business classes were calling for; what meant profits for them meant jobs and better wages for the workingman and promised safety and stability for the bourgeois governments.

If industrial expansion was a bulwark to bourgeois political supremacy, then it seemed reasonable that the government should support industrial expansion. And if industrial expansion depended upon controlled sources of raw materials and controlled markets, it appeared conclusive that the state should turn to protection and imperialism. Moreover, it was argued, colonies would offer another means of drawing off a discontented excess population without the loss to the country of these valuable citizens after they had been educated and trained at

home to produce wealth or to fight in the army. Then, too, big business was frequently interested in products indispensable to government—for example, in petroleum and its by-products: for the sake of national security there must be oil for naval craft, for locomotives, for aircraft; it would seem, then, a duty of governments to prevent their own supplies of these precious products from getting into the hands of potential enemies. It sometimes happened, too, that imperialists discovered opportunities for profit in islands of strategic naval importance; in such cases, plain duty called for the state to acquire or control such points; if the state safeguarded itself to the profit of business enterprise, so much the better for business. And, finally, it is not to be forgotten that these imperialist governments are the governments of the business classes. The men who sit in power in cabinets and parliaments are products of the same business traditions as those not in power; sometimes they are business or financial leaders themselves, owning large blocks of stock that may be benefited by government action. It is humanly impossible for most men not to see in their own interests the interests of the country at large.

### **Changing conception of the role of the state**

It is evident that the clamor of big business for government aid and the response of governments to the clamor are indicative of a growing distrust of complete individualism. A number of factors, discussed in earlier chapters, contributed to bring the change about; the influence of certain historical events of the sixties is pertinent. The unification of Germany and of Italy drew men's minds decisively to the significant part which governments play in society. In both cases revolutionary democratic movements had miserably failed in the great enterprises of unification, while governments had signally triumphed. The general result was to exalt government. Writers began to point out that the state had a great role to play in society. The hands-off doctrine of *laissez faire* must be modified. Society, they said, must be organized, directed, controlled, and safeguarded by the state. It seemed evident that the future belonged to the great states—the powerful imperial states.



We have already seen how governments proceeded to launch wide programs of social legislation in response to this changing conception of the proper role of government.<sup>1</sup> The intervention of the state in external affairs—imperialism—is another expression of the same influence.

This change meant that thenceforth the state, as a positive instrumentality, was to become an aid and a guardian to economic life in a new sense. It would seek to promote the prosperity of the individual and protect his property, but it would do these things with an eye to realizing the great aims of the state itself; it would make the state prosperous and powerful, ready for any emergency. Economic nationalism was now to be joined to political nationalism to build state power.

The exalting of the state had a stimulating effect on the nationalistic emotions of the "man in the street." The all-powerful state with its capacity for good to the citizenry became a kind of thing to be worshiped; and patriotism was its religion. In such a soil, national egotism flourished; a belief in racial or national superiority became a kind of cult. It was not difficult to clothe the conception with trappings necessary to complete it. Having created a civilization superior to all others, the people must protect it not only in the homeland but also in the colonies whose preservation, it was argued, was requisite to the well-being of the motherland. The obtaining of colonies might mean jobs, prosperity, and security. As for the backward peoples of the earth, they too must share in the benefits of a superior civilization. This was a duty of the superior to the inferior; this was the "white man's burden." Thus, where and when it became necessary to appeal to the electorate to furnish the sinews of naval expansion, the building of a railroad in a far-off land, or the execution of a military coup, the ammunition was at hand to make an impassioned plea to stir men's emotions.

By the beginning of the 1880's Great Britain, like the continental states, responded to the new imperialist impulse. She no longer enjoyed her earlier position of commercial supremacy and undisturbed power. Markets which had been more or

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 384 ff.

less of a monopoly were being invaded by Germany, later by the United States. Countries like Germany and France were turning to protection to reduce or discourage competing products from Britain and from elsewhere. And Germany and France were turning to a vigorous imperialism to dispute with the greatest imperial power the control of lands not yet occupied by the European states. British opinion gradually veered away from the earlier indifference to empire. With other nations striving for new markets the world over, Britain must not rest content with what she had; a new race for empire was on; and she must throw herself into the contest. The Empire, said Joseph Chamberlain, was commerce; it had been created by commerce; it could not exist without commerce. It was urged further that the day of the "little Englander," as the anti-imperialists were called, was over; the world had changed; the future did belong to the great states. Bereft of her empire, it was argued, England would sink to the rank of a third-class power, as Holland had done. For proud Britain such a position was unthinkable. And so Great Britain, after a brief interval of some half century, turned again to a forthright imperialist policy.

In this aggressive scramble for empire all of the strong pre-war states took part: Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, the United States, and Japan. These, it is to be noticed, were the leading Powers of the world. They were the states whose military and naval power equipped them to play the dangerous game of international politics. There is one little state, however, which ventured to play the game—Belgium, which won an empire in central Africa. Three other weaker states possess empire, but their empire is made up almost entirely of fragments retained from the old colonial period—Spain, Portugal, and Holland.

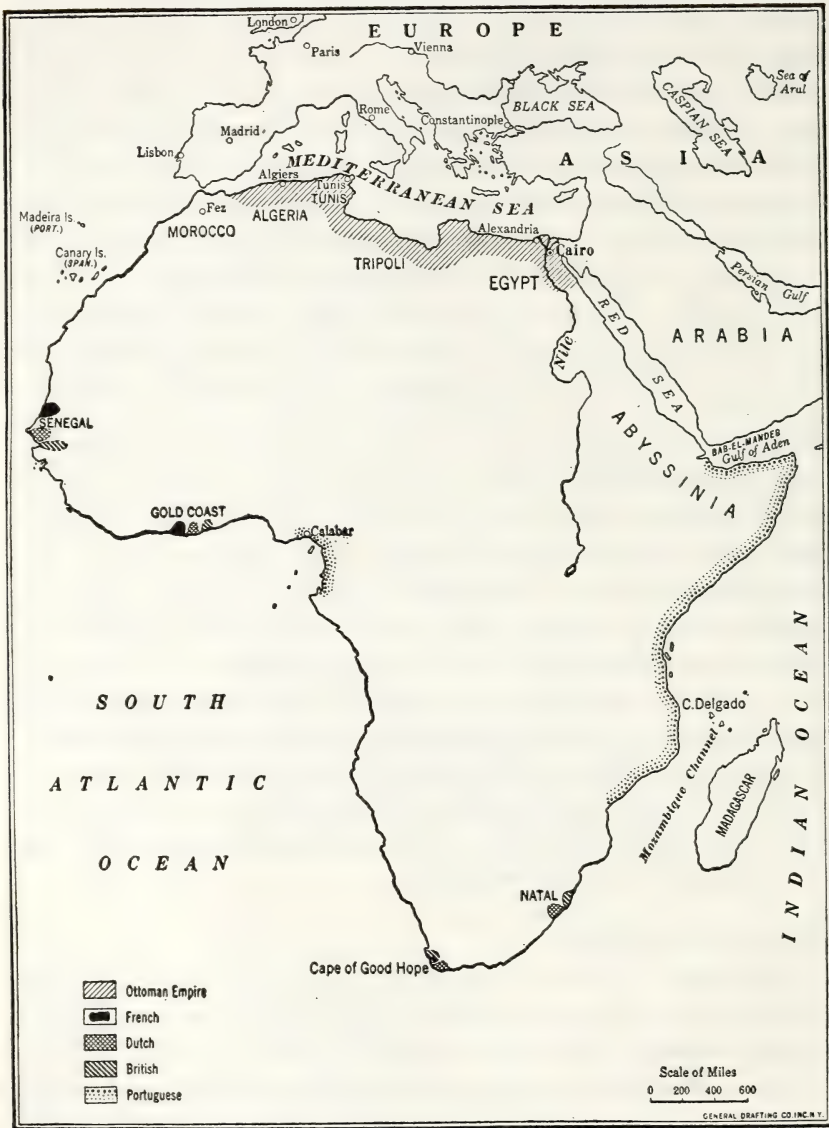
From the discussion thus far it appears that the roots of imperialism—the human interests and forces that furnish the tremendous drive behind the movement—run deep into the economic and political life of modern society. Seen in perspective, the facts presented may serve to clarify the subject by reducing it to simple terms. What seems to have happened

is this. Beginning in the Middle Ages, Western society lived under a type of economy in which the economic energy of the community was totally absorbed in a narrow locale from which it drew practically all that supported its poverty-ridden existence. Then, toward the close of the period, and particularly in the opening centuries of the modern era, commerce entered as an important factor in economic life; and as a result new desires took possession of certain classes of society, desires which could no longer be satisfied within the narrow limits of the local environment. Thus society reached out beyond intervening continents and seas to obtain the materials which would enrich life and satisfy new human longings. Then came the machines as a kind of savior of populations many times multiplied. With material betterment and human comfort as a dominant ideal, the new industrial society accepted the idea that economic progress means expansion—production and ever more production—with, incidentally, profits and ever greater profits. Industry must go on; to stand still meant to go back. Such an intensification of industry, with its rich and ever more elaborate output, must needs draw for the materials that feed the machines and for markets to consume the product not on a local environment or on the producing country but upon every corner of the globe. Thus modern imperialism in its final essence is an incident in an enormous industrial expansion. This is, to be sure, an oversimplification, yet it contains the kernel of an essential truth about imperialism.

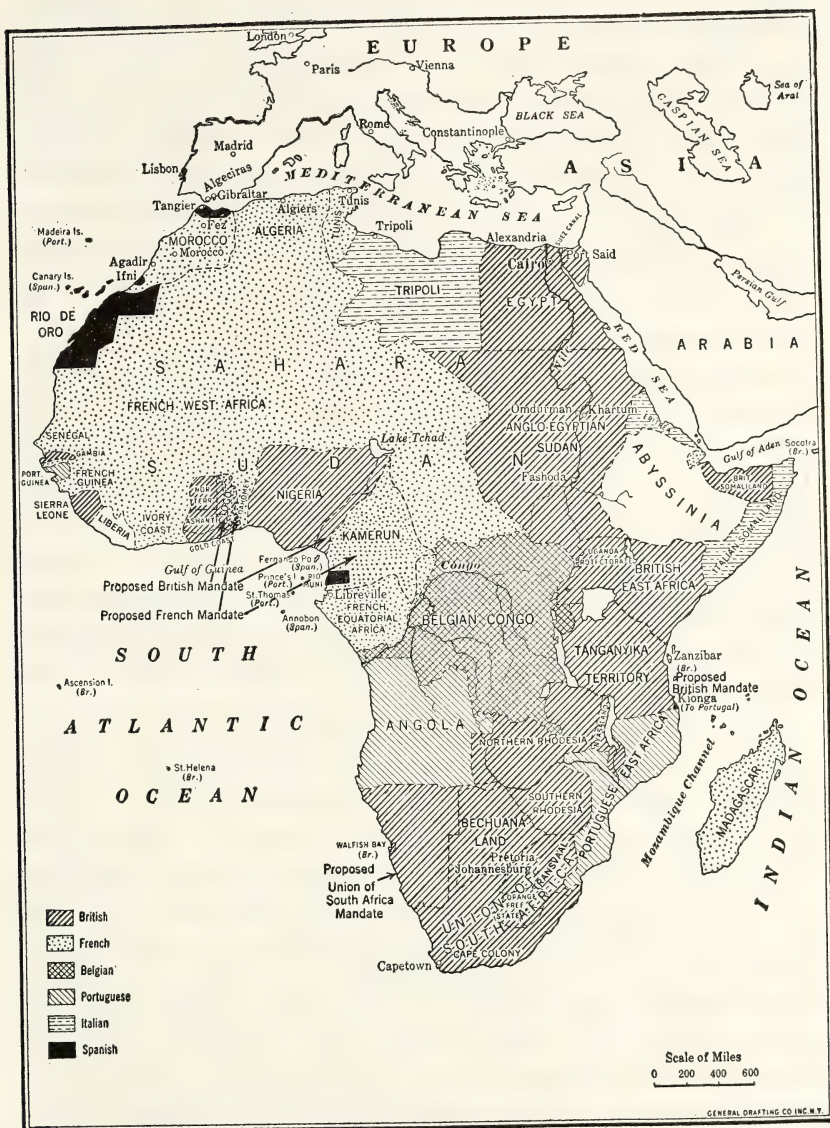
#### **How lands were obtained**

The fields of the old colonialism were for the most part confined to the Americas, southern Asia, and the islands of the sea, particularly the islands of the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean. When the new desire for territory seized the industrial countries, Africa, all but untouched in the earlier period, became a major field for exploitation. China and Turkey were added as imperialist prizes also, together with islands here and there which had remained free or had become free through the disintegration of the old Portuguese and Spanish empires. To these areas must be added those of Mexico, the Caribbean, and





18. AFRICA IN 1800, SHOWING THE SLIGHT EXTENT OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT DURING THE PERIOD OF THE OLD IMPERIALISM



19. AFRICA IN 1914, SHOWING THE EXTENT OF EUROPEAN OCCUPATION DURING THE PERIOD OF THE NEW IMPERIALISM

Central and South America, which have become largely an outlet for American loans and investments.

All these areas caught the attention of the imperialists because they possessed products more or less valuable, and in some cases indispensable, to the Western industrial nations. In the eyes of the imperialists here was great wealth not being utilized by society. And much of it was unutilized, for in many of these regions the inhabitants had not reached a stage of culture in which either the desire or the capacity to develop their resources was present. Economically they were "backward" peoples. In the second place, these lands were affected in varying degrees by political instability and weakness—they had not developed "strong" governments; they were unable to maintain order; they lacked both the science and the wealth necessary to produce military strength comparable with that of the European states. Here, then, were lands displaying alluring wealth and opportunities for Western enterprise to be had by those who dared to put out their hands to take them; and there existed no governments sufficiently strong to prevent. To alert, profit-seeking Europeans such regions looked like a kind of imperialist's paradise.

The procedure followed in obtaining control of these areas varied as the circumstances varied. In Africa, except in the northern part, the ignorance and weakness of the native tribes made possession comparatively easy. Sometimes these tribal lands were taken outright by soldiers sent out by the exploiting country, or by the private soldiers of a European company. Usually such direct and ruthless methods were excused on the ground of some overt act committed by natives, such as an attack upon the white intruders by tribes who resented the white man's invasion. A more common procedure was to obtain title to lands by entering into treaties with the chiefs. The chief, ignorant of the ways of the white man, ignorant of the language in which the treaty was written, and not infrequently put into receptive mood by gifts and the white man's liquors, was induced to part with the tribal possessions for trifling considerations. Henry M. Stanley, the great explorer, acting as agent for the Committee of the Upper Congo, secured for the



Committee a vast region in central Africa of nearly one million square miles—the right of possession, as Stanley viewed the transaction, being based upon some four hundred and fifty separate treaties. The considerations entering into one of these treaties will make the matter concrete. In one case sovereignty and possession was passed to the Company by a tribal chief who received as compensation “one coat of red cloth with gold facings, one red cap, one white tunic, one piece of white baft, one piece of redpoint, one dozen boxes of liquors, four demijohns of rum, two boxes of gin, one hundred and twenty-eight bottles of Holland gin, twenty pieces of red handkerchiefs, forty singlets, and forty cotton caps.” Stanley’s treaties were typical of many that figured in the transfer of African lands. In other cases the compensation took the form of money payments or gifts of firearms and ammunition or promises of protection to a tribal ruler against hostile rulers of neighboring tribes.

In northern Africa—in Morocco, Tunis, and Egypt—and in certain other Mohammedan lands, the technique was of another sort. This region, once a part of the medieval empire of the Arabians, later conquered in large part by the Turks, was divided into a number of semi-oriental despotisms. Politically they were unstable, subject at any time to uprisings by turbulent chiefs; economically they were backward and poor, and the ruling princes were chronically in need of money. Yet there was great potential wealth in these undeveloped regions for Europeans who should seize the opportunity to exploit it.

The opening wedge was usually made by private companies through a process of economic penetration. That is to say, the companies obtained concessions from the ruler to exploit agricultural or mineral lands or to build railroads or other public works; or investment bankers extended to him much-needed loans. These concessions created an economic stake in the country to be safeguarded in case of difficulty. And the difficulty was frequently supplied by the ruler’s financial dealings with the European investors. Loans made at exceedingly high rates called for interest payments which the ruler attempted to obtain by heavier taxation. Heavier taxation frequently

brought a revolt of his subjects. To put down the revolts he needed more loans, and the more he borrowed the greater became the stake of the white intruders, and the greater the danger to their investments. When European governments intervened, as they did, to straighten out the financial tangle and to safeguard their nationals, it was only a matter of time until it was found necessary for them to set up protectorates by force. Such was the procedure, with minor variations, which carried France into Tunis and Morocco, Great Britain into Egypt, Italy into Tripoli, and Russia into Persia.

The procedure followed in Turkey and China by the European Powers, and by the United States in the Pacific, the Caribbean, and other parts of Latin America, would involve us in complications of detail beyond the scope of this brief treatment of the subject. The illustrations given will afford some conception of the spirit and the process of modern imperialism. The process has been successful during the whole modern period—so far as the acquisition of territory and power is concerned—for at present more than half the area of the entire globe has been brought more or less completely under the authority of the imperialist countries. (See maps on pp. 532 and 533.)

#### **How the wealth is exploited**

Once territory is obtained, the white man's next object is usually to exploit it. From a broadly social point of view, what is happening under imperialism is the enrichment of the material life of society. From the point of view of the individual exploiter, what is happening is the enrichment of his own financial returns. He is interested in possession and authority in these lands as a means to an end; the end is commonly the opportunity to make profits. He wants gold, diamonds, copper, tin, lead, chromium, mica, manganese, fertilizers, cotton, hemp, wool, tea, rubber, ivory, palm oil, petroleum, grains, spices, fruits, and scores of other things. It is the backwardness of the peoples possessing these things that gives the imperialist undeveloped or even virgin fields in which to operate. Many of these products he could not get—at least in sufficient

quantity—by a policy of permitting the natives to gather or produce them, since the natives lack the necessary knowledge and technical equipment.

What the exploiter does, therefore, is to carry his technology with him to the spot, and apply it with such modifications as circumstances impose. He introduces his science and machines and European methods amid strange surroundings. Furthermore, to utilize the resources, he finds it necessary to engage in numerous public works; he improves rivers and harbors for navigation; constructs highways and bridges, railroads, telegraph and telephone lines; establishes banks and post offices. These modern facilities are doubly profitable when they are introduced into countries like China, India, and Turkey, where their construction has meant the purchase of materials in the exploiting country to be paid for in part by the country exploited. In regions like southern and central Africa, where the natives have little or nothing to give, the expense often falls upon the taxpayers at home. It is obvious, however, that the introduction of Western technology into countries that are less advanced economically will ultimately result in material enrichment.

Where economic development was most retarded—as in central and southern Africa, for example—the imperialist was confronted by a serious labor problem. Among the natives there generally, the concept of labor as an obligation did not exist before the white man came. Such a concept found no lodgment in their traditions. Material needs were simple, and nature furnished most of what was needed without much labor on the part of man. Nor did money compensation present any particular lure for the native. As a rule he had not experienced the need of it. Here, then, was the problem: white labor did not exist in sufficient quantity to meet the demands of the exploiter; in many cases the white man appeared to be unsuited to work under the climatic conditions; methods must be devised, therefore, to induce the native to submit to regularized employment as he had never done before. With few legal hindrances to check him the imperialist found himself, particularly in the earlier years, fairly free to use any procedure which



he found efficacious. The result was much inhuman and brutal treatment of the helpless natives.

To the credit of imperialism in Africa it may be said that slavery, which had flourished there down to the closing decades of the nineteenth century, was almost completely abolished as a result of extended and vigorous methods of suppression. To the discredit of imperialism it must likewise be said that it imposed upon the African blacks a system of *forced labor* that in some instances was little removed from slavery itself. The numerous and ingenious methods invented to compel the native to work cannot be discussed here. Suffice it to say that one of the most common devices was to deprive the native of his land so that he became more or less dependent on the white man for a living.

Of late years a reaction against such treatment has set in, and the inhumanity of the white man's practices in some parts of Africa has been mitigated. Spurred on in part by the protests of certain conscience-ridden groups and individuals, home and colonial governments have intervened through legislative enactments for the protection of natives. In the inauguration of more enlightened and humane policies Great Britain has, on the whole, led the way. The new idea is to preserve as much of the native economy as is practicable. The native is permitted to retain his lands and is encouraged to gather the native products or to utilize the soil for agriculture, the fruits of his labor being sold to the white man at a fair price. This more humane practice is laudable as far as it goes, but up to the present it has made little progress, and this usually only in regions sparsely populated by whites.

#### **Debts and credits of imperialism**

With this brief sketch of imperialism before us, we are perhaps in a position to attempt an evaluation of this phase of capitalistic economy.

Imperialism is still a powerful force in the world. It is an expression of beliefs and practices accepted by those in high places as the road to national prosperity, prestige, and power. It fits consistently into an age of rampant nationalism and

materialism. It is nationalism flowing in economic channels—a phase of economic nationalism. It carries the fierce competitive spirit of the modern industrial world into the field of international relations. It is mercantilism over again in altered form. In a world economically interdependent it sets up as its ideal the mercantilist goal of the self-sufficing state. To such lengths has the idea progressed that the whole globe, particularly since the World War, presents a picture of rival and antagonistic states digging themselves in behind high tariff barriers both at home and to a considerable degree in their colonies. In a distracted world where the fundamental need is a reasonable freedom to buy and sell according to the economic requirements of each, states wage a bitter economic war against one another that contributes heavily to the strangu-lation of international trade and the stagnation of economic life. Against this background, it becomes clear that imperialism is playing a double role in modern economy. It has contributed to a world economy by spinning a web of commercial threads between the industrial countries and the undeveloped areas of the globe. At the same time imperialist policies present the most formidable obstacles to the harmonious operation of an international economic order and to the cause of international peace.<sup>1</sup>

As a process of spreading Western civilization over the world, imperialism presents elements both good and bad. By the introduction of certain features of Western political machinery to bring and hold subject communities in control, the imperialist is introducing backward peoples to phases of modern government, both good and bad. In the extension of Western technology and its products, he is teaching the elements of modern economy. Along with these political and economic practices of the West, imperialism is incidentally introducing countless items of Western civilization—such matters as religion, morals, vices, education, customs of dress, amusements, and the like. The tendency over the whole globe is toward a greater degree of homogeneity than has ever existed before. Thus these affected regions are now in a state of transition, with

<sup>1</sup>This aspect of the subject is examined in a later chapter. See pp. 793 ff.

all of the advantages and evils that transition involves. The student evaluates these "civilizing" agencies with reservations. Perhaps he is unduly influenced by the conviction that such as they are, these "gifts" of civilization are largely by-products of the imperialist's pursuit of material gain. Nevertheless, the facts do lend a measure of truth to the appealing popular picture of the imperialist struggling under the "white man's burden," in his high mission of carrying civilization to the dark corners of the earth.

One is led to inquire whether the advantages enjoyed under imperialism by Western society compensate for its costs. Where the economist is not convinced that they do not, he at least has serious doubts on the question. An adequate discussion of this phase of the subject leads into a labyrinth of statistical data. We shall have to be content with a few statements of conclusions that writers have drawn from the evidence available.

Imperialists emphasize the great importance of colonial markets and the control of raw materials to the industrial nations. There can be no doubt about markets; colonial markets are of great importance in international trade, and they are growing more so as the backward countries advance in economic development. But does imperialism determine the distribution of colonial trade among the imperialist countries? That is to say, does possession and the opportunity to manipulate colonial tariffs determine who shall enjoy colonial markets? Economists point out that answers to that question, based upon trade statistics, are strikingly contradictory. By manipulating tariffs in their colonial possessions some countries have apparently obtained the lion's share of the trade, but in many other cases they have failed to get as much of the trade of their own colonies as is enjoyed by other countries. Geographic factors, freight rates, and other considerations often prevail against the supposed advantages of possession and tariff preferences, in determining the direction of commerce. And what is said here concerning markets holds essentially true when one considers the advantages of colonies as sources of raw materials. In the first place, no state can acquire posses-



sion of enough of the world's resources to make it self-sufficient; and in the second place, the possession of sources and the control of colonial tariffs have by no means guaranteed to the possessors the full enjoyment of the raw materials of their colonies. It would be interesting to know just how much the imperialists would lose in colonial trade and raw materials if colonies were thrown open to the commerce of the world. In all probability, far less than they think.

The emigration of trained men to other countries is an undoubted economic loss to the motherland—and also to her available man power for military purposes—but the argument that the possession of colonies prevents this loss is unsound. Few Germans could be induced to go to the German colonies while Germany had colonies; no appreciable number of Frenchmen have been persuaded to go to the French empire in northern Africa, or Italians to Tripoli, or Japanese to Manchuria. Few men are willing to confess that they belong to the "excess population"; most prefer to cleave to the country of their birth, or, if they must leave, prefer the older settled countries to the new.

Another pertinent question in evaluating imperialism is this: Granted that direct investors may make handsome profits out of imperialist enterprise, can the same be said of the nation as a whole? Do the profits of investment bankers, planters, mining and oil corporations trickle down to the masses who have no direct stake in imperialistic exploitation? An extreme answer to the question is to say that the nation affords the protection and pays the expenses, and the individual exploiters and stockholders receive the profits. Such an answer has a kernel of truth, but it does not suffice. Profits to individuals do affect the economic well-being of the common man to some slight degree. Just how much is an intricate problem for the economist to decide.

What is to be done about imperialism? Should the imperialist states use their authority to abolish it? They could not do it if they desired; and it would probably be unwise if they could. Modern industrial and commercial expansion is a force of such tremendous power that it is out of the question to

confine it. Local areas and national areas have long ceased, as we have seen, to supply the economic needs of modern society; it is not justifiable that certain backward peoples should be permitted to fence off products indispensable to that society. The question is: How can imperialist practices be shorn of their evils, so that all peoples may enjoy the fruits of the earth without the risks and wrongs bound up with present practices? The solution that at present seems to offer the best chances of some success is that of international control. If an international control could be so designed as to protect the exploited peoples on the one hand, and to compose the dangerous rivalries of the imperialist states on the other, by providing for a distribution of markets and raw materials on some equitable basis, then the problem would be solved in some of its most important aspects. Some half-hearted attempts have been made in this direction under the authority of the League of Nations, but little has been accomplished thus far. That such a solution is the only one with expectation of success is clear, since the problem of imperialism is, above all, an international one. If a satisfactory international solution is effected, imperialism will cease to be—at least the thing which we now call imperialism.

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## THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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**P**RECEDING CHAPTERS have revealed the stages through which the economic life of European society passed haltingly from a simple agricultural economy in the early Middle Ages to the complex organization of the twentieth century—a growth spanning some 1400 years. The economic development of the United States offers no parallel to that of Europe, for it has taken place wholly within the period of modern civilization, and thus has been free from the restraints of long-established medieval institutions. Changes have been extremely rapid, and to the extent that they can be quantitatively measured in terms of area, population, and the material standard of living, have occurred with accelerating speed. Recent reverses in the general trend cannot as yet be recognized as more than a temporary interruption, although some signs may indicate that the country has entered upon an era of lowered prosperity.

In rapidity of growth the United States has outstripped European countries in economic development principally because this country was new. Indian inhabitants made but limited use of its natural resources. The westward-moving pioneers, when once they had cleared primeval forests and broken through thick, tough prairie sod, became possessed of a rich soil that had never felt a plow. They found abundant, unexploited timber, minerals, water power, and grazing lands. The methods by which these rich resources were turned to the

economic support of a rapidly growing people were not dictated by long custom nor maintained by vested interests. Inventive ingenuity, of which there was an abundance, had a free field in which to operate. Instruments and methods of creating wealth were continually improving. Individual business enterprise found generous incentive to risk capital and to adopt technological innovations. Despite the wastefulness encouraged by the magnitude of resources in proportion to population, national wealth was swiftly enhanced until, before the end of the nineteenth century, the United States had become materially the richest single country of the world.

The history of economic development in the United States may thus be generalized: (1) In 1790, after obtaining independence and political organization, the country built a new national economic structure based largely on agriculture. (2) In 1850, it had reached the apex of its preindustrial expansion and had made a good start in industry. (3) In 1900, industrialization and empire were forcing upon the country a new system of economic control. (4) In 1939, the conditions of 1900 have become seemingly remote, and the new American economy is being operated under arrangements which in 1900 would have been rejected by the great majority of the people as fanciful or at least untenable. In the following pages an attempt will be made to picture economic conditions as found at each of these successive stages in our history.

### THE ECONOMIC SCENE IN 1790

The United States consisted in 1790 of thirteen Atlantic coastal states and a sparsely occupied and only partly organized territory stretching from their western frontiers to the Mississippi River. British Canada lay to the north; Spanish Florida and Mexico, to the south; and Spanish Louisiana, to the west. The population numbered approximately 4,000,000, of whom about one-fifth were enslaved Negroes. For nearly two centuries Europeans from the British Isles and the Continental countries had been filtering into the British colonies. These immigrants had settled for the most part upon the eastern slope



of the Appalachian system and in its valleys. During the quarter-century preceding 1790, however, migration into the Ohio and Mississippi valleys had been in progress. A new Federal Constitution had just gone into effect, and the national capital had not yet been moved from New York City. The new government was devoting itself to the creation of conditions favorable to the advance of free economic enterprise. It was strengthening the public credit, establishing a stable currency, regulating interstate and foreign commerce, and fostering American shipping. After a severe depression of business accompanied by much social turbulence, prosperity was returning.

### Agriculture

The country as a whole was predominantly agricultural; regional differences, however, distinguished farming in the New England, Middle, and Southern States. In the South, commercial agriculture yielded export crops of indigo, rice, and, in particular, tobacco. In 1790, 130,000,000 pounds of tobacco were raised. In the Middle States agriculture yielded not only a variety of products for home consumption but also large surpluses of cereals, notably wheat, for export. In 1790, over 1,000,000 bushels of wheat were exported. In New England, self-sufficing farming communities raised a great range of cereals and other foodstuffs for local consumption. In all three regions extensive areas were devoted to the raising of corn and flax and to pasturage for livestock.

Conservatism, scarcity of labor, and absence of markets combined to keep New England farming in small units operated by families. Wooden fences and stone walls marked the bounds and subdivided the fields and pastures and orchards. About one-tenth of the average farm, that is, between ten and twenty acres, was tilled for such crops as Indian corn, flax, and root vegetables. Methods and implements were traditional and inefficient, but the incentive to improvement which a demand for larger yields might have provided was not felt. Most of a farm's output had to be consumed by its inhabitants. The lure of cheap and fertile lands on the frontier broke

through even the ties of family relationship and migration westward limited the labor supply required for additional clearing, for draining and fertilizing the land, and thus increasing productivity. Agriculture in the Middle States, while subject to similar labor conditions, was closer to town populations to whom surpluses were sold. It was somewhat more commercialized.

The most significant feature of Southern agriculture was the use of Negro slaves. The attempt made during the early colonial period to subject Indians to slavery had failed; moreover, the use of the poorest among the immigrants as "indentured servants" had met with little success in the South. Africans were imported not long after the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, and slavery was an accepted practice throughout the South before the end of the seventeenth century. In response to the liberal sentiments prevalent at the time of the American Revolution, Northern states prohibited slavery at, or near, the time when independence was attained. But from Delaware to Georgia, Negro slavery continued, in the face of opposition—strongest in Virginia, but existent elsewhere. Practical difficulties obstructed the tendency towards emancipation wherever slaves were numerous, and in the lower South, where they were much needed for the pioneering work of clearing farm lands, proslavery sentiment was particularly strong.

Cotton had not become an important crop in 1790, although its cultivation was considered highly desirable. The only kind which could be profitably produced was limited to the soil and climatic conditions of islands such as the British Bahamas and those off the South Atlantic coast. But the separation of seeds from fiber was made practicable by machinery when, in 1793, Eli Whitney devised an efficient cotton gin. In another decade, seedy types of cotton were being planted on lands formerly devoted to tobacco and other crops in the interior South. That section had started on the way to making cotton its "king."

### **Manufacturing**

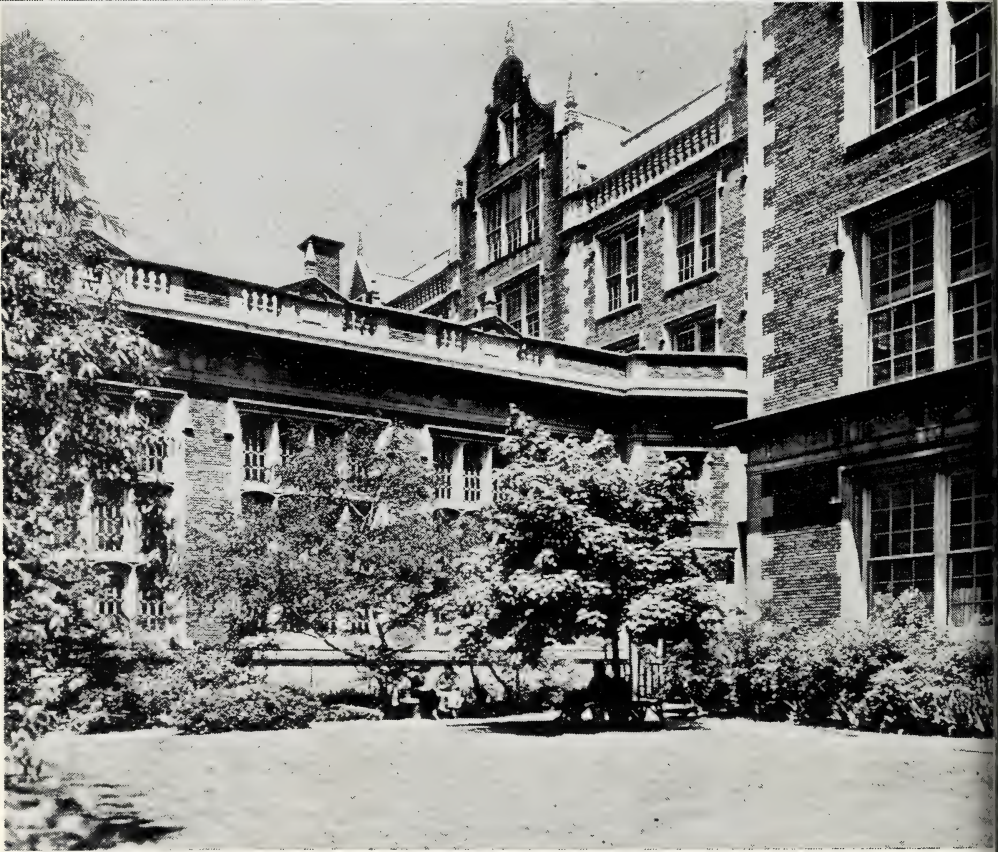
Several types of manufacturing were in operation in 1790. Some of them were typical of colonial days and were to persist





A panorama of a great city becomes even more fascinating at night when its buildings show their myriads of lights. This magnificent view of New York, looking downtown, was taken from the top of the RCA Building in Radio City.





Better homes and better schools are two objectives of the new social order. The upper picture shows a section of the new Williamsburg Houses, consisting of modern, inexpensive apartments built upon the site of squalid tenements. (Courtesy New York City Housing Authority.) The lower illustration is a picture of a modern school in a beautiful setting, the Bay Ridge High School in Brooklyn. (From *All the Children*, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools of the City of New York.)





Hospital facilities, especially in urban communities, are rapidly being augmented. The picture at the top gives a view of the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, one of the newest and most complete hospital units in the United States. (Photo, Wide World, Inc.) Recreation for the greatest number of people, convenient to their homes and low in cost, is another achievement of social betterment. The lower picture shows a part of the state-owned and state-operated Jones Beach, Long Island, with its great expanse of ocean frontage. (Photo, Long Island State Park Commission.)





Modern bridges combine beautiful design with useful purpose. Inventive genius has made these structures possible through the discovery of alloys that give steel and other metals greater strength without increased weight. Comparison of this picture of the Whitestone Bridge over the western extremity of Long Island Sound with pictures of bridges built twenty-five or thirty years ago will show in vivid contrast the advances that have been made in design and construction. (Courtesy Triborough Bridge Authority.)





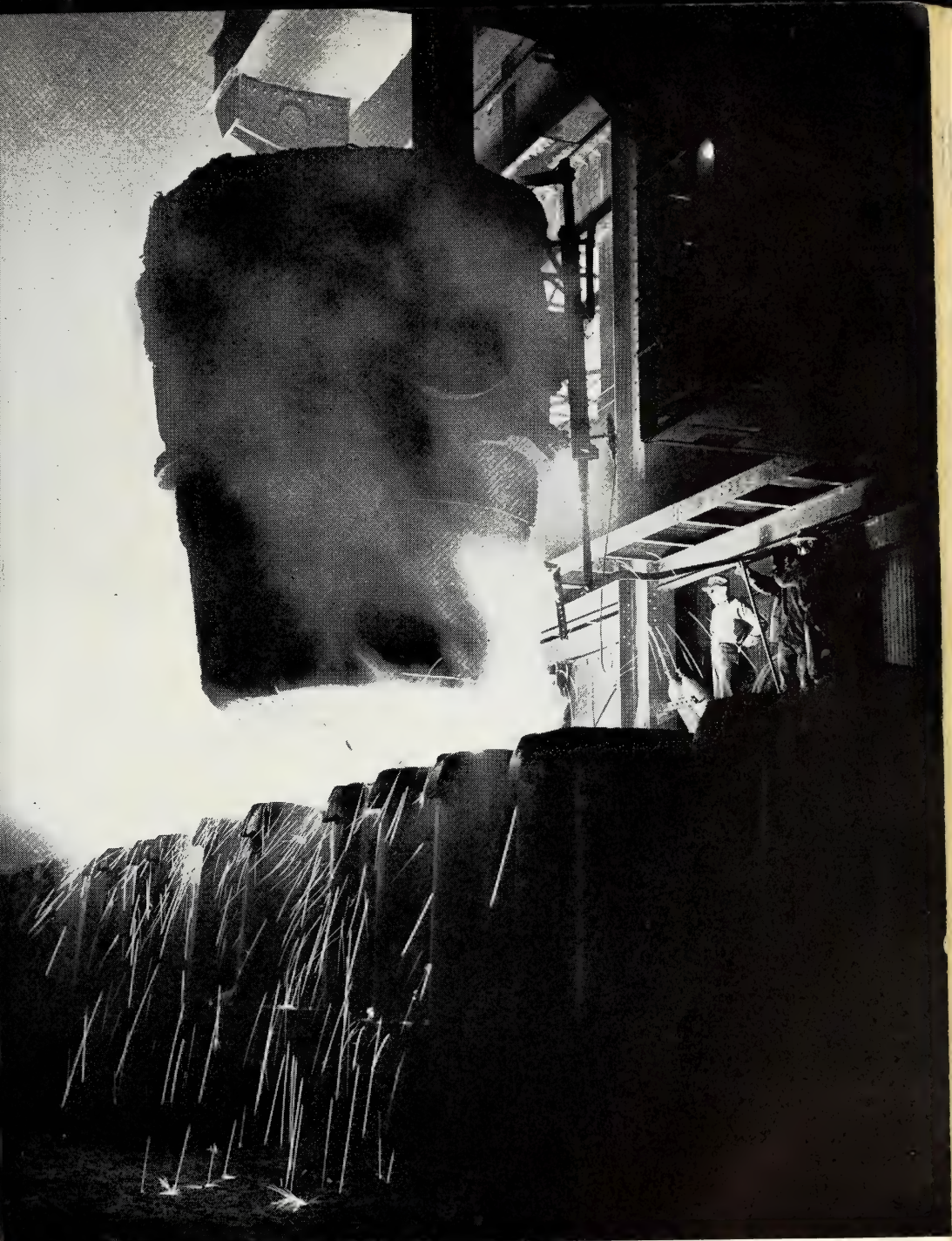
The modern architect conceives his building reaching into the clouds; the modern workman executes the plan with remarkable speed and skill. In this picture we see, through the skeleton of a building in process of construction, the completed RCA Building in New York City, rising nearly a thousand feet above the ground.





Farming in the modern manner is illustrated by these pictures of plowing, and of reaping and threshing. Large-scale production of the staple crops at low cost has been made possible by the development of efficient farm machinery. (Photos, courtesy J. I. Case Company.)





This mammoth bucket pouring steel ingots exemplifies the hugeness of the machinery man must control and operate to meet the needs of the highly industrialized age in which we live. (Courtesy Bethlehem Steel Company.)





Charles Burchfield (1893- ) and Charles Sheeler (1883- ) find their inspiration in the modern American scene. At the top is Burchfield's *November Evening*, a Midwest scene enlivened by rhythmical lines and mysterious color. (Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.) Sheeler's industrial scene, *American Landscape* (lower picture), owes much of its effect to its extreme simplicity of form and line. (Collection Museum of Modern Art.)

to the Civil War days and even to the present day. Industry in general was organized as either (1) homespun, (2) household, or (3) shop or mill.

Homespun industry converted raw materials produced on the farm into articles for home consumption. Flax and wool were cleaned, spun, and knitted; or were woven into fabrics, and then sewed into garments. Hides were tanned and the leather made into footgear. While in most instances this work was done within the household, itinerant workers sometimes came to the farms to work upon raw materials originating there.

Household industry derived its name from the place where the work was performed. / It resembled the European domestic system which intervened between the craft guilds and the rise of factories. Raw materials, whether from the farm itself or from elsewhere, were manufactured into products for general sale. New England's domestic looms, for example, furnished thousands of yards of linens and other fabrics to merchants as far away as Philadelphia. Hosiery, knit goods, and woollens were made in thousands of households to be sold ultimately to distant consumers. A typical fireside occupation of farmers in winter was that of hammering handmade nails out of iron. Merchant-middlemen distributed to household workers such raw materials as straw for hats and bonnets; boot and shoe uppers to be finished before being sewed to lasts and soles; machine-knit legs and feet of stockings, to be sewed together, and threads or yarns to be woven into cloth. When the merchant called for the finished products, he paid for the labor upon his materials by bartering goods from his stock.

Some merchants supplemented household industry by organizing in towns shops where craftsmen worked together regularly in the merchants' employ. Other shops were founded by master-workmen who took orders for goods from whatever source they could be obtained. Mills also were developed, to utilize either water power in the manufacture of flour, lumber, and other things, or abundant fuel in baking bread, distilling liquors, refining sugar, smelting iron, and making glass. In 1790, an English immigrant, Samuel Slater, spun the first American machine-made cotton warp at Pawtucket, Rhode



Island, and thus established the basis of what several years later became the factory textile system.

The production of metal wares required special establishments. Iron furnaces and forges had been set up before the American Revolution in two belts, one near the coast in the vicinity of deposits of bog-iron ore, and the second, farther inland, from Vermont to New Jersey, near deposits of magnetic and brown hematite ores. The fuel used in smelting was charcoal. Foundries, especially for the working of smelted iron into castings and wrought iron, were scattered throughout the country, utilizing water power. Brass casting was often done in the same foundries. For the next forty years, the metal industries remained dispersed and in the mill stage of organization.

What has been said should indicate what was true, in general, of manufacturing throughout the wide range of products which, at the end of the eighteenth century, Americans desired and used. The bulk of manufactured goods were made in homespun and household industries. The market was local. The capital investment was small. Machinery was operated by hand or by animal power, except for the scattered, numerous, small mills, using water power. Except at Philadelphia, there was no considerable group of wage-workers in manufacturing. In the country there was no separate manufacturing interest.

#### **American commerce**

Foreign commerce in American vessels in 1790 was in a state of prosperous expansion. The first Congress encouraged American shipping first by reducing the general tariff on goods imported in American bottoms, and secondly, by a large reduction in the fees charged all vessels whenever they entered an American port. American shipbuilders were able to construct wooden sailing vessels equal to the best in the world and at lower costs; they were active and prospering. At the same time, new trade with Far Eastern ports was opening up vistas of profitable undertakings for the merchants of New England. Their textiles, hardware, and trinkets were traded to the Indians along the Pacific Northwest coast for furs, and in the



Hawaiian Islands for such tropical products as sandalwood. In China, notably at Canton, the furs were bartered for silks, muslins, and tea at rates which yielded enormous profits for several years. Trade with the French, Spanish, and Dutch colonies was to become even more extensive during the Napoleonic Wars. At that time the United States was the foremost maritime neutral nation.

Domestic commerce was conducted on a far smaller scale than foreign trade. The merchants of the seaports acted as wholesalers. In the smaller towns, merchandising was done in "general stores," and in the countryside, by itinerant peddlers. Agricultural fairs supplemented these commercial agencies. Distribution was confined within limited areas, moreover, for want of easy transportation either by waterway or overland. The Federal Constitution, however, provided for internal free trade throughout the country, and commercial interchange expanded as rapidly as turnpikes and other modes of transportation could be developed. It was not until the second quarter of the nineteenth century that these transportation facilities were available.

The great variety of coins circulating in the United States in 1790 gave evidence of the world-wide range of its trade relations. British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and other foreign coins were freely used in preference to the depreciated paper currencies left over from the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary periods. In 1792, Congress adopted a plan submitted by Alexander Hamilton, the country's first Secretary of the Treasury, for coining dollars of both silver and gold; also subsidiary coins based on the decimal system. In 1791 a bank of the United States was chartered by the Federal government for a period of twenty years. This bank was empowered to issue paper currency in the form of redeemable notes. Its branches received government deposits and honored Treasury drafts. In Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, independent banks existed and aided in the processes of interstate commerce.

Thus in 1790 the economic development of the United States had reached a stage which was predominantly agricultural but capable of becoming industrially and commercially

far more active. Land continued to be the major form of wealth. Seafaring commerce was second to agriculture as a source of income and a field of employment for American labor and capital. Industry was geographically dispersed and still in the handicraft stage.

### THE UNITED STATES IN 1850

In 1850, conditions in the United States offered surprising contrasts to those prevailing during the period we have thus far considered. The population had grown to 23,000,000, of which about 3,600,000 were colored, and for the most part, enslaved. In area, it had become transcontinental by the successive acquisitions of Louisiana Territory, Florida, Texas, the Oregon Territory, and the large Mexican Cession. Vermont, Maine, and Florida had been admitted into the Union. Westward-moving population had brought into existence fifteen new states west of the Appalachians. Into California a stream of gold-seekers was running. From Europe immigrants were pouring into the United States, mainly into northern states. In 1854 alone these immigrants numbered 430,000. For about twenty years canals and railroads had been under construction, knitting together the several parts of the major industrial regions, and making a beginning of uniting the far interior to the seaboard, and the North to the South. Steamboats plied the rivers and the larger lakes, as well as the coastal waters. In the new railroads, however, lay the basis of the country's phenomenal economic growth. Over 9,000 miles were available in 1850, and before another decade had passed the total mileage in operation was to exceed 30,600 miles. Conflicting with this tendency toward economic integration was the growing sectional disunity over the issue of slavery and the conditions associated with it. A great political compromise in 1850 temporarily calmed the national temper, and permitted the further linking of northeastern and North Central States by economic bonds before the outbreak of war in 1861.

In the economic organization of the country three loosely bounded regions were distinguishable; of these, two were agricultural. The West, from Ohio to Iowa and Wisconsin, sup-

plied meat and cereals, and such raw materials for manufacture as hides, wool, and hemp. The South, extending from Maryland to Texas, produced the old export staple, tobacco, and the overshadowing new crop, cotton. The Northeast, besides a considerable agriculture, furnished most of the manufactures, controlled finance, and carried on the bulk of commerce and shipping. Only one-eighth of the population lived in communities numbering as many as 8,000 people. Agriculture was still dominant in American economy in 1850; it had in fact attained the climax of its relative importance in the United States.

### Agriculture in the South

Between 1790 and 1850, the cotton output of the United States swelled from 4,000 bales to 2,136,000 bales. Such an increase was made possible only by a great enlargement of the area devoted to its cultivation and by an amazing expansion of the cotton market. The "Cotton Kingdom" spread inland and westward. Cattle grazers were pushed across the Mississippi and beyond. Frontier-clearing farmers sold their small holdings to be consolidated into large units, frequently organized as plantations. Repeated plantings wore down the soil's fertility and hastened the cultivation of new areas. Cotton fields edged their way toward the Great Plains. Whatever else was produced on Southern farms and fashioned in Southern shops, the prosperity of the South had been rendered dependent upon the cotton market. In the northeastern United States and in England, the raw cotton of the South had its principal buyers. As a consequence of the Industrial Revolution's rapid innovations in textile manufacturing, the demand for the raw material seemed inexhaustible.

In 1850, most of the white people of the South held few, if any, slaves and cultivated their crops on farms not differing greatly in size from those of the North. But this condition was overshadowed by the frequent appearance of the plantation, modeled in many ways upon the old tobacco plantations of colonial days. Cotton cultivation was suited to the capacities of slaves and to plantation organization. Its simple operations were easily taught. Much of the work was not heavy, and



could be performed by women and children as well as by men.

The principal disadvantages of the plantation system were not felt until the advent of two conditions at a time shortly before the War for Southern Independence. These conditions were (1) the scarcity of lands suitable for cotton and (2) the relative scarcity of slaves. In spite of the fact that slave labor was ignorant, easygoing, and wasteful, still as long as land remained abundant and cheap, such labor yielded net income. Land values mounted, however, as new cotton areas diminished. Slaves became increasingly high-priced when the African slave trade ceased in 1808—at the very time when the acreage of cotton cultivation was expanding westward. Loss of slaves, therefore, whether by illness, injuries, maltreatment by overseers, or successful flight became exceedingly damaging. Overseers usually received a share of the crop as compensation, a practice which encouraged them to force both the land and the labor, to the detriment of both. Thus while the yield per acre shrank, the capital investment in cotton production grew. Moreover, when cotton output caught up with demand, the price dropped. The less efficient, older farms ceased earning net income; it has been argued that whatever revenue most plantations derived came from impairment of their capital.

#### Northern agriculture

Northern agriculture—using the term Northern to apply to both the Northeast and the West—furnished no counterpart of the plantation. Its units were smaller. Free labor only was employed. A typical Northern farm was operated by one family; it included fields, meadows, pasturage, and woodlot. But the self-sufficient farm community which in earlier time provided subsistence only for its own inhabitants, was, in 1850, undergoing a marked change—a change made possible by improved transportation facilities. The river system, so vital to the interior population, had been supplemented by turnpikes and canals. By a widespread use of these waterways, the movement of even the heaviest and bulkiest freight was accomplished with relative ease and economy, and now each farming community could profitably produce a surplus for shipment to

other parts of the country and even abroad. The opening of the Champlain Canal in 1823, linking the Hudson River by Lake Champlain to the St. Lawrence River, and, two years later, of the Erie Canal from the Hudson to Lake Erie, stimulated energetic canal construction in many parts of the country, especially in the Ohio River valley. In 1850, the steamboats on the Mississippi River and its tributaries exceeded in number all the steam vessels bearing the British flag. On at least one occasion before 1850, a cargo of cotton had been transported to New York City not by sea but by inland water routes up the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, thence by canal to Lake Erie, and again by canal to the Hudson River. The supremacy of waterways in transportation, however, was not to last long. In 1850, railroads were still primarily engaged as feeders of traffic for the waterways system; but before a decade had passed, the railroads themselves were sufficiently unified and extended to furnish economical through carriage from western points of shipment to eastern ports and markets, and were diverting to themselves much of the heavy traffic which had formerly gone down the Mississippi River to the Gulf.

Total production on northern farms, moreover, was greatly increased by an improvement in farm implements. Iron and steel replaced wood in many tools. Plows were improved and made of standardized, replaceable parts. Machinery was devised to harvest and even thresh grain. As a direct result of these aids to farming there was a great increase in the acreage devoted to agriculture. About 20,000 new homesteads a year were organized in the North during the forties. The wheat and corn crops of 1850 were valued at \$80,000,000; by 1860, they had almost tripled in value.

While the two sections were thus paralleling each other in their expansion westward, they were, nevertheless, growing far apart economically. The institution of slavery was making the South almost wholly dependent on agriculture; its economic well-being was associated with the production of cotton and tobacco for export. On the other hand, the North, where labor was uniformly free, was not only growing rich by agriculture, but was laying the basis for industrial expansion.

## Manufacturing

Between 1790 and 1850, the volume and variety of American manufactures rose to meet more nearly the needs of the larger body of American consumers. In Philadelphia alone, at least 800 different kinds of articles were being fabricated during the fifties. Pig iron, metal products, textiles, farm machinery, locomotives, clipper ships, river and ocean steam vessels—these and other manufacturing products had grown to astonishing volume during the interval from 1790 to 1850.

*Influences affecting industrial expansion.* Certain influences contributing to the growth of manufacturing should be noted, as follows: (1) the interruption of normal trade relations with Europe during the Napoleonic wars, which made European manufactures unavailable, particularly during the period of Jefferson's Embargo (1807-1809) and of our second war with England (1812-1815); (2) the enactment of protective-tariff legislation after 1816; (3) the growth of improvement in transportation; (4) the adoption of power machinery; and (5) inventions and new processes.

The first two of these influences need little explanation. When trade with Europe was interrupted, enterprising businessmen in America seized the opportunity to supply the American market for manufactured goods. They were practically free from foreign competition, and hence could sell at prices high enough to cover their costs of production—which normally were higher than manufacturing costs in Europe. When, however, the wars came to an end, the recently developed manufacturing industry was threatened with destruction by the influx of cheaper European goods. It was then that the second factor came into play—the protective tariff. Beginning in 1816, Congress passed one tariff measure after another for the protection of American industry. The theory back of these tariff measures was that the tariff rate should always be high enough to equalize the difference between cost of production at home and abroad.

Industry once started in America owed much of its rapid growth to improvements in transportation. The railroads



provided not only quicker service, but continuous service. They could operate all year long, whereas water transportation was frequently interrupted during cold winter months. They brought markets of much wider extent within economical range of individual manufacturing units, and thus stimulated production on a larger scale. This in turn reduced the unit-cost of articles and gave to the larger, more efficient establishments an advantage over locally made goods produced in households or small shops. Mill-spun yarns and factory-woven fabrics could be carried hundreds of miles and still be sold at lower prices than comparable articles made in the old way. The same was true of an ever increasing variety of goods. The railroads, moreover, by their own needs contributed much to industrial growth; for their construction and operation the output of many iron and steel mills and manufacturing plants and coal mines was required.

The adoption of power machinery was another factor contributing to the growth of American manufacturing. During this period steam power was becoming increasingly and more widely practicable. The stationary engine was perfected, and its manufacture undertaken by many concerns. Railroads could carry coal as cheaply as barges and convey it to communities not accessible to waterways—communities which previously had been dependent on dwindling supplies of wood fuel. Enterprising manufacturers used steam power to operate mills erected in cities which had already attained considerable size as commercial centers. There they tapped a large supply of labor and benefited from the existing financial and marketing facilities. Specialization of work in the mills made it feasible to use labor in no sense mechanically expert. Thus the tendency of early manufacturing to cluster about scattered water-power sites was reversed. The tendency was toward urban concentration.

Finally, the importance of new processes in manufacture should be noted. Among these was the application of the principle of standardized and interchangeable parts. This had first been put into effect in the making of firearms during the Revolutionary War, but was later to be applied in the mak-

ing of iron plows and machinery. It became the basis of an entirely new industry when, in 1850, factory production of watches was instituted at Waltham, Massachusetts. It was to become a distinguishing feature of American manufacturing.

*Some characteristic features.* The typical manufacturing unit in 1850 was larger than in 1790 and was found in the larger communities. Homespun and household industries persisted in the more recently settled, frontier areas, but the normal plant was a shop or a mill. Factories existed but were not numerous. The typical unit was the mill. Hand-operated machinery, moreover, still competed with that driven by power. New devices, to be operated by hand, were sold for household use in preparing cotton, flax, or wool for weaving. The sewing-machine was not adapted to power operation until during the War between the States. Power-driven machinery was more widely used than in 1790, but its spread did not keep pace with the spread of population across the country; it remained relatively concentrated in the northeastern region. Within that area, certain localities specialized in some limited line, such as Lynn, Massachusetts, for women's shoes, Brockton, in the same state, for men's shoes, and New York City for marine steam engines.

Basic to the expansion of American industry was the rise of iron manufacture. In 1850, more than 600,000 tons of pig iron were produced from deposits of ore and coal scattered, in the main, along the valleys of eight rivers and their tributaries. Two-thirds of this output was produced along the Ohio River and its tributaries, the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. Besides being cast into thousands of articles, it was used for such considerable machinery as marine and stationary steam engines and locomotives, and for iron stoves, of which about 500,000 were made in 1850. Steel production was not yet extensive, the need being filled largely by importation. The use of Lake Superior ores began in the fifties, but the rise of the Pittsburgh area to first importance had not occurred.

The American textile industry was the first to adopt factory organization. Its center was New England, despite the existence of various mills in the southern Appalachians nearer the

cotton fields. But in 1814, Francis Lowell and associated men of enterprise invested a large amount of capital at Waltham, Massachusetts, in the first factory in the United States. It combined all the processes necessary to the manufacture of dyed or printed cotton fabrics from raw cotton. Its success seems not to have rested so much on the technical efficiencies of the plant and its operation as on the commercial acumen of the men who directed it. Other concerns of equal technical merit were sometimes unsuccessful. Those which followed its example in management proved to be profitable enterprises. Factory organization spread slowly, however, and could not be considered typical in 1850. New England's leadership in this direction could be attributed to the combination of water power, a mechanically apt population, a relative abundance of capital accumulated through commerce and privateering, and a considerable market among the compact population.

Some types of manufacturing developed to greatest advantage near the market; others, near the source of raw materials. Of the former type, the manufacture of stoves may be cited. The tendency toward concentration in industry narrowed the important foundries in 1850 to those in six centrally located cities: Philadelphia, New York, Providence, Albany, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati. Farm machinery was made in the areas of greatest use. The famous Case threshers were turned out at Racine, Wisconsin, and the McCormick reapers at Chicago. In this same region other machinery, including cotton gins, was manufactured and at Clintonville, Georgia, and Prattville, Alabama, two important producers of cotton gins were established. The centers of flour milling, distilling, and meat packing moved west with the producers of their raw materials along the Erie Canal and the Ohio Valley. The greatest lumber mills moved from Maine to Albany and Chicago.

### Commerce

Domestic commerce in 1850 was to a considerable extent a realization of a program urged upon the country by Henry Clay in the twenties. In essence his program called for protection for American industry against foreign competition.



Urban communities devoted to manufacture would thus multiply. These would supply markets for farm produce and for the raw materials of forests and mines. With a steady market for their surplus crops the farmers would be able to buy the manufactured products of the cities. The exchange of goods between rural areas and the urban centers would keep the transportation systems busy and lead to their steady expansion. With the expansion of the agricultural areas would come surpluses of cereals and cotton which, sold abroad, would help pay for the large importations of capital—prior to 1860 nearly half a billion dollars of foreign capital was put into American railroads alone!

Many debatable questions arise in any consideration of the salient features of Clay's program—nationalism versus internationalism, free trade versus protection, large profits for the industrialist versus small profits for the farmer. But the historical fact is that the United States made rapid strides toward prosperity even before 1850.

As the South expanded, but still devoted itself more and more completely to agriculture, it became a wider market for many manufactures from the North, notably cheap grades of cloth, hardware, and flour. The sectional interdependence existing in 1850 rested upon the transportation system, which, it must be again stated, changed rapidly in the decade which followed. More and more of the products of the West (instead of going down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico) were diverted to the Northeast or to Southern plantations by rail and water routes.

Before sectional interdependence could be fully developed, however, the transportation system had to be supplemented by adequate commercial institutions. Merchants to bridge the long gap from producer to consumer were an essential part of the system. Capital with which to finance the movement of raw materials to market, or the distribution of manufactures to retailers and ultimate consumers, had to be accumulated and made available through efficient agencies. Such a commercial expansion was in its early stages in 1850.

Foreign commerce had grown in 1850 to a volume com-

mensurate with national expansion. The industrial revolution in Europe and the rapidly growing population there made necessary the importation of foodstuffs. In 1846, the British abandoned tariff protection for wheat as part of a sweeping change to free trade. The War between the States practically put an end to shipment of American cotton to British textile factories, but it was discovered that American wheat and flour were even more necessary to the English. Trade with the West Indies was released from mercantilistic restraints in the thirties, and had advanced considerably by 1850.

The exports and imports of the United States were carried principally in American ships. In 1850, eighty-three per cent of American foreign commerce was so carried. Shipbuilding was a prosperous business. The famous clipper ships dominated the seas at that time; strong, swift, and enduring, they could be operated by smaller crews than their European competitors and were foremost on all the major trade routes. Steamships were encroaching on their traffic, however, and the shipyards of the British Isles were assuming a long lead in the construction of iron ships propelled by steam power. The prospects for American shipping were uncertain in 1850, and, as later became apparent, the long decline had already set in. The coastwise trade, however, was monopolized by American lines. To Southern ports they carried textiles, boots and shoes, fish, and varied New England manufactures to the value of perhaps \$100,000,000 annually; on the return trip, they carried cotton and tobacco and other agricultural products.

Thus, in 1850, the economic development of the United States had carried agriculture to the peak of its importance, relative to industry and commerce. Farming had changed from local self-sufficiency to production for distant markets. Surpluses from both the free agriculture of the North and, as formerly, from the slave agriculture of the South, were exported abroad. These exports balanced considerable imports of manufactures and, especially, large amounts of foreign capital invested in the growing American industrial system. Within the country the new transportation facilities had al-

ready brought into existence an economic interdependence among the sections. The standard of living had greatly improved. The population had grown immensely. For the country, the prospects of vigorous advance were threatened by but one great danger, that of political disunion and possible civil war.

### AMERICAN ECONOMY IN 1900

Between 1850 and 1900, the economic life of the United States was transformed by the processes of industrialization. While population tripled, the national wealth increased twelve-fold. Property utilized for manufacturing increased ten times in value, while the number of wage earners in manufacturing establishments rose from 1,000,000 to 5,000,000, approximately. There were 443 plants which employed over 1,000 each. Not only had industrialization proceeded this far; it had accelerated so rapidly during the last decade of the century that manufacturing property increased in value twice as rapidly as farm property. During this half-century, cities increased in number and in size. From a predominantly agricultural country in 1850, the United States had become largely industrial in 1900, in ways which will be indicated as we consider the new conditions in the several fields of economic life.

#### The advance in manufacturing

In 1900, the United States was the world's foremost manufacturing nation. Great organizations of men, material, and power machinery were united in the processes of mass production of standardized goods. High quality and low unit-cost enabled American articles to compete readily in the world's markets. Within the United States, the policy of tariff protection against foreign articles and of free commerce between states yielded a nation-wide market for the output even of small factories. Most manufacturing was done in the region north of the Ohio and Potomac rivers and east of the Mississippi; the industrial Northeast of 1850 had greatly expanded with the westward movement of the country. While New York furnished manufactures valued at over \$2,000,000,000



—nearly one-sixth of the total for the nation—Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois each possessed a great industrial population, rivaling Massachusetts. Even the South was now the scene of rapid growth in the manufacture of textiles, iron, and steel.

### Arrival of "The Age of Steel"

The half-century following 1850 was the period within which steel replaced iron. The slow and costly processes by which steel had been produced before the Civil War were replaced immediately afterward by two newer methods of European origin. The Bessemer processes utilized a converter, independently devised in the United States about 1847 by William Kelly of Pittsburgh, but perfected in England by Henry Bessemer of London between 1855 and 1860. Its central feature was the passage through molten iron of a blast of compressed air. The result was steel which varied greatly in quality in spite of all efforts at control. The second method was adaptable to ores of lower quality and could be adequately controlled to produce a uniform result. It combined the Siemens furnace devised in England with a technique perfected by two Frenchmen named Martin. The Siemens-Martin method was widely adopted in the United States after 1868, and was referred to as the "open-hearth" process. Where endurance was desired, steel was discovered to be more economical than iron. Steel, therefore, replaced iron in rails, girders, boiler-plates, wire, wheels, bridges, and the moving parts in machinery. It was used with other metals in the manufacture of innumerable products invented in the United States, such as telephone equipment, bicycles, typewriters, cash registers, adding machines, elevators, linotypes, corn cutters, and automobiles.

The manufacture of crude steel in 1900 centered in the Pittsburgh district, where the Carnegie Steel Company was dominant. With the expanded transportation system now in operation and the new mechanized methods of loading and unloading cars and ships, it was found most economical to bring ore in vast quantities from the surface deposits adjacent to Lake Superior to the vicinity of the smelters' new fuel, coke,

obtained by roasting bituminous coal in a great system of coking ovens. In other Great Lakes states, and in Alabama and Tennessee, other lesser works turned out quantities of iron and steel. The national production in 1900 was almost 30,000,000 tons, about half the world's total. European steel manufacture was eclipsed.

Iron and steel were only the most impressive items among a great variety of American metal products whose manufacture was made profitable by abundant supplies of minerals and mineral oils. In the Far West, deposits of copper, lead, zinc, coal, and the precious metals were exploited. In the reduction of gold and silver ores, mills crushing hard quartz and utilizing large-scale chemical processes came into operation. The petroleum industry had spread from western Pennsylvania to oil fields in many parts of the Mississippi Valley. The American minerals produced in 1900—including the iron and steel output described above, and also aluminum and phosphate of lime—were worth more than \$1,000,000,000. As finished products, their value was enhanced by at least an equal amount.

#### **The extension of machine power to other fields**

The production of meat and meat products became an industrial enterprise using large-scale methods between 1850 and 1900. In the quarter-century following the War between the States, the grazing of beef cattle on the public domain and on large ranches was a striking factor in westward expansion. From "cow towns" on the plains trainloads of cattle were shipped into the Corn Belt for fattening and slaughter. Chicago, with a great area devoted to feeding pens, slaughterhouses, and facilities for the storage, cutting, and shipment of meat and meat products, became the center of this industry. By-products, such as bristles, leather, soap, glue, and buttons, were manufactured on a great scale. St. Louis, Omaha, and Kansas City replaced Cincinnati and Alton as the most important packing centers. Refrigerator cars brought fresh meat to branch distributing houses, or to seaboard cities for export in refrigerated ships. Western beef, pork, and lamb

competed with meat products of local origin on the counters of even small-town butchers.

Clothing passed from the handicraft to the machine stage of manufacture prior to 1900. While tailors and seamstresses continued to find employment, the expanded domestic market was supplied with the products of machines which cut cloth to standardized patterns, trimmed edges, united seams, cut and hemmed buttonholes, attached buttons, and thus made possible cheap, ready-made garments. The work was done for the most part in shops rather than in factories, and generally was done on order. Labor was recruited among immigrants and was exploited in what were widely denounced as "sweat-shops."

Machines were in general used in producing boots and shoes, rubber footwear, bricks, paper, canned foods, refined sugar, cigarettes, window glass and glass in other forms, and a wide range of small items. Although handicraft occupations continued to employ skilled workers, operators of machines were perhaps equally numerous among the skilled crafts.

New industries of great importance were the manufacture of chemicals and electric equipment. Problems of electric generation and transmission were solved in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, so that in 1900 electric power was widely used for lighting and the operation of rapid transit systems within or between cities. In 1884, the Solvay Process Company of Syracuse, New York, commenced manufacturing soda. Within the next decade, electrolytic processes were adopted for the manufacture in bulk of industrial chemical compounds, including those used for bleaching, paper-making, heating, and lighting. With all this great expansion in the consumption of electricity, that industry was in 1900 hardly over the threshold on its way to future growth.

### **Industrial labor**

The industrialization of the United States multiplied the number of people working for wages paid by others. These ranged from the common laborer who wielded a pick or shovel to the skilled operator of a typesetting machine or the maker



of fine furniture. They found themselves competing for work under conditions which varied, but which, as the end of the century approached, generally made them much more dependent upon the employers than were employers upon them. To protect themselves from exploitation by employers and to obtain legislation advantageous to their kind, some of them organized and maintained labor unions. They resorted to strikes and boycotts, during many of which violent disorders occurred. They experimented with various kinds of organization. In 1900, the strongest was the American Federation of Labor, a league of autonomous, constituent groups, consisting mostly of skilled workers, and characterized also by limited objectives. They sought recognition, better wages, shorter hours, and safer conditions for their members. Strong independent unions existed, especially among the railroad workers. But the mass of wage-earners belonged to no unions and were prevented from joining, either by doubts about their worth or by fear of employers' opposition. Employers were, in general, antagonistic to unionization and fought against it. Public opinion was with them, partly because of the persistent belief in economic individualism and partly because of the tendency to associate unions with strikes, and strikes with violence.

### **The rise of "Big Business"**

Industrialization in 1900 not only reached the proportions thus far described; it also brought the country face to face with the question of the desirability of further limiting freedom of economic enterprise. For capitalistic production was then organized through corporations, many of which were of unexampled size and power. Both the economies of large-scale production and the desire to minimize actual competition promoted this resort to big-business units. The thousands of small businesses struggled against the favoritism which the large concerns enjoyed as big customers for fuel, power, freight transportation, and raw materials. Business opportunity was threatened by the destructive methods of competition with which some of the largest units attacked newcomers and small independent rivals, forcing them to sell out to the giants or

driving them out of business altogether. In various ways, however, combinations were organized within which competition was obviated. To protect net earnings on huge investments of capital, business managers entered into schemes to limit competition and to maintain prices well above costs. Outsiders received no mercy from these "trusts," as they came to be called. In 1904, the combinations had been organized, or reorganized, as holding companies, and 318 units existed where previously one found about 5,300 separate industrial concerns. Of these, seven were capitalized at over \$2,500,000,000.

Freedom of enterprise enabled financiers to build up such titanic corporations; the resulting condition was one in which freedom of enterprise—that is, competition—was minimized. The public was dismayed at the advent of economic barons who could not be controlled through the ballot box, and whose powers enabled them to direct the economic well-being of the many. An anti-monopoly movement gathered strength through the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1887 the railroads were first brought under Federal regulation to prevent discrimination in charges, and other abuses of the opportunities open to the carriers. Three years later, through the Anti-Trust Act of 1890, the Federal government began to combat monopoly in other business. These beginnings of Federal intervention were, however, unavailing until strengthened by later legislation. A more emphatic type of government coercion to protect competition seemed to be needed.

The rapid industrial advance of this period rested partly upon the expansion of population in the cities and over the West, partly upon innovations in technology, partly upon re-invested American capital and large European investments, and in great measure upon the freedom of enterprise which the laissez-faire philosophy supported. At no time, however, was business unassisted by Federal legislation of some sort, such as tariffs, currency and banking regulation, and aids to shipping. In other words, governmental policy promoted the economic enterprise by combining positive aid to business with a large measure of economic freedom. The unparalleled op-

portunities afforded by American conditions encouraged the rise of a conspicuous number of remarkably able leaders in various fields. Some were builders. Others sought power, and obtained it as financiers. Some conceived plans for railroads, mills, mines, or oil wells, or executed them; others drove the enterprisers from control and absorbed their properties in great combinations. This vigorous industrial activity greatly enriched the country, but at the same time it resulted in many problems in the distribution of income and of wealth for which no solution had been discovered in 1900.

### Commerce

The foreign trade of the United States changed between 1850 and 1900 not only in an increase in volume, but also in the nature of the principal types of imports and exports. Prior to the eighties, manufactures were but a minor part of the exports. Then they commenced growing, reaching in 1900 about one-third of all exports in value. At the same time, imports of manufactured goods dropped to one-sixth of the total, while imports of raw materials—notably rubber, wool, silk, coffee, and sugar—showed large increases. The balance of trade was more heavily than ever on the side of exports, which amounted to nearly two-thirds of the total commerce. Foreign trade was valued in 1900 at \$2,200,000,000.

Throughout this period domestic commerce was carried on behind a tariff wall, and although the height of this wall fluctuated as a consequence of party politics, the barrier was always substantial. Freely moving interstate commerce (and other trade wholly within a single State) enjoyed the world's largest single market. Growth of the transportation and banking systems reflected the great increase in domestic commerce. Railroads carried about 192,000,000,000 ton-miles of freight in 1900, almost twice as much as they carried in 1890. Traffic through the canal at St. Mary's Falls, connecting lakes Superior and Huron, rose from 400,000 tons in 1860 to 37,000,000 tons in 1900. It was only on the Great Lakes, however, that water-borne traffic continued to grow despite the competition



offered by the railroads; this growth of traffic on the Great Lakes was largely due to the fact that water transportation was most economical for the steady stream of ores from Lake Superior to the smelting plants in the Allegheny district.

### American agriculture

Of the characteristics of American agriculture as practiced in 1900, none was more significant than its complete commercialization. After the Civil War, the small family-type farm supplanted the plantation in the South and became universal, but instead of continuing to form part of a self-sufficient community, it too became a unit in the national system for producing crops, livestock, dairy products, and fruit for general sale. Farms were operated with machinery—for which the farmer was often in debt—and managed for cash profits. Money income was used to pay off debts and to buy from distant industrial producers much that farmers had hitherto produced less efficiently on the farm, or had gone without. Farm revenue was dependent on markets into which poured the production of millions of separate units, markets over which the farmers exercised no control. The last quarter of the nineteenth century was one of declining farm prices, with a consequent impoverishment and discontent in both West and South. Agricultural organizations became the basis of a movement of political protest voiced through the People's Party. In 1900, however, the price trend was on its way up, hopefulness had returned, and the Populists were dwindling in numbers and zeal.

The proportion of population engaged in agriculture had dropped to one-third of the whole, but individual capacity to produce had been sufficiently enlarged to yield enormous surpluses sold abroad. The cotton crop of 1900 amounted to 10,000,000 bales, worth about \$375,000,000. Tobacco cultivation was revived by the introduction of different varieties raised in new areas, both South and North, until in 1900 the crop brought \$57,000,000. Wheat was harvested from thousands of square miles of land brought for the first time under cultivation; as early as the decade of the seventies, the aggre-

gate wheat area exceeded that of France. In the westernmost parts of the Mississippi Valley were found high plains, where windmills, wire fences, and occasional groves of trees and adjacent buildings interrupted endless seas of grain. Droughts also occasionally pushed back settlement, but a technique of "dry farming" was introduced to combat the influence of barely sufficient rainfall.

Wheat production utilized a twine binder (invented in 1878) by which harvested grain was bundled and tied as the machine was drawn through the growing plants. Corn, of which the crop totaled in 1900 about two billion bushels, was cut by a device patented in 1888. At about the same time, on the western plains, combines were brought into service which not only harvested but threshed, cleaned, and bagged the wheat in one continuous operation. In the hay and dairy belts, a considerable variety of machinery for cutting, raking, loading, and stacking hay, and for planting, harvesting, and preparing corn fodder for silos was sold. Most important, perhaps, was the cream separator patented in 1880. The whole value of farm machinery in the farmers' hands in 1900 was valued at \$750,000,000. Its use not only saved labor; it also expanded output and cheapened costs to such a degree that American agricultural exports to the industrial populations in Europe in 1900 had reached the large total of \$226,000,000 in the form of crude foodstuffs and \$320,000,000 in the form of manufactured foodstuffs. This was approximately twenty times the value of the corresponding exports of 1850. It did not, of course, include cotton.

In 1900 prosperity in the United States was general, the whole country benefiting from the expansion in industry, agriculture, and commerce. The recent acquisition of insular possessions as the consequence of the war with Spain brought the United States into the stream of imperialism. Holding the Philippine Islands, Guam, and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific, the country looked forward not only to increased trade with them, but also to even richer opportunities for trade with Asia. In the Caribbean region, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Canal Zone (leased in 1903) afforded a new market for

American capital, and held forth promise of profitable trade relations.

### THE MOST RECENT PHASE IN AMERICAN ECONOMY

Between 1900 and 1929, the United States experienced several drastic changes in its economic position in the World. (1) It ceased to be a debtor country owing to foreign lenders of capital a total amount in excess of that owed by foreign borrowers to Americans. During the World War, and in the years immediately following it, the United States became a creditor country; that is, more was owed to it than it owed to others. Its loans abroad grew until economic disaster forced their cessation. (2) Its agriculture was not only overexpanded during the War beyond possible peace requirements, but also it met after the war the competition of the cheap lands and fresh soils of South American countries. All through the twenties, "farm relief" was a severe problem for the nation. (3) After riding a high wave of internationalism, the world fell into a trough of economic nationalism. Against the free movement of goods and gold in international trade, country after country imposed barriers intended to protect the home market for the home producers, or at best to make it available to others only in return for strictly equivalent opportunities. While these conditions were becoming prevalent, the United States experienced a decade of further business consolidation into huge units, of minimized competition, and of a varied expansion that stimulated extraordinary stock speculation. The crash in the stock markets in 1929 was the beginning of a dismal period of business depression. Without analyzing its causes further, or measuring its calculable effects, we may assert confidently that the depression after 1929 has been responsible for a new stage in economic history.

#### Government and business

The impressive change brought about in our economic system is this, that private enterprise in all the important fields is now subject in many respects to the approval and collabora-



tion of Federal agencies. Competition is no longer relied upon to yield the desired benefits to the public; much less freedom in business methods is possible within the law; and direct guidance to the economic system is furnished by government purchases, government employment, and government-guaranteed or government-made loans of money.

The depression in the United States was approximately contemporaneous with one in central and western Europe. Disasters there worked injury to recovery here, but international coöperation promised a return to economic health in the latter part of 1932. Then, while recovery gained abroad, the United States went from bad to worse, suffering a banking panic and unemployment estimated at over 13,000,000 workers in 1933. At that point, the New Deal began its work of relief, recovery, and reform. To combat the emergency, power was centralized in the President and used by him to operate numerous new and energetic government agencies. Recovery methods were soon merged with reform motives. Not simply to put people back to work but to keep them there became the basic objective, as business recovery developed during 1936. Correcting the old evils was not enough; they must never be permitted to return. With these intentions, many emergency regulating agencies were made permanent; temporary grants of authority by Congress were renewed repeatedly, until indefinite continuance was contemplated. When, however, another depression arrived in 1937, there was much questioning of the new powers which the Federal government was exercising over national economic activity.

In any consideration of the existing Federal statutes and the boards, commissions, corporations, and authorities which administer them, one must be impressed by their variety and scope. Agriculture is regulated by an Agricultural Adjustment Administration which seeks to keep the production of basic crops and commodities within the limits of presumed demand. The Department of Agriculture disposes by gift and sale of surpluses coming into its possession. Banking and finance are dominated by the policies and regulations imposed upon them by the Federal Reserve Board, the Securities and

Exchange Commission, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Federal government has gone into banking on a multi-billion dollar scale. Industry finds its labor subject to a national regulation of minimum wages and maximum hours, and protected in unionization by a National Labor Relations Board. Both on employers and on workers pay-roll taxes are levied to support systems of insurance for unemployment and old age. The traditional drive against monopoly is maintained by the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission. The latter is particularly concerned with the conduct of commerce, evil practices in which it undertakes to correct. Transportation is closely regulated by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the United States Maritime Commission, and a Civil Aeronautics Authority. Public utilities are, when engaged in interstate transmission, subject to the supervision of either the Federal Power Commission or the Federal Communications Commission. These illustrations merely indicate the general condition; they are not in any way a complete description of the ways and means by which public officials can now influence business management.

The luxuriant growth of Federal agencies, during the emergency and thereafter, multiplied the number of government employees and government offices. The problem of providing work or donations for unemployed millions brought an enormous additional burden upon the treasury. Government expenses soared. Some of the increase was taken care of by increased taxation, but a large percentage of the funds needed for budgets of about \$8,000,000,000 a year has been obtained by borrowing. This procedure has brought the public debt to a total close to \$40,000,000,000, on which the annual interest charge alone approximates \$1,000,000,000. In every direction, taxable wealth has come under the legislative eye as a potential source of new revenues.

The American economy has thus reached a stage at which, by the combination of taxes and regulatory authorities, the Federal government can check or promote business enterprise. Motivated by considerations different from those which influ-

ence men who take business risks, public officials are a somewhat uncertain factor in the calculations of those who plan for the future. They can interrupt the course of business and, in the name of the public welfare, even break agreements with relative freedom from responsibility. Such administrative discretion jeopardizes business planning. The government depends, on the other hand, for its future solvency and current effectiveness upon enlarged national income. For this goal, greatly increased business activity is necessary.

Government and business are in a relation demanding leadership. To some thoughtful observers it seems highly uncertain that an evenly balanced partnership can succeed. One can hardly doubt that, such a situation failing to yield prosperity, government will eventually be found taking more control. And if, as may be supposed, that policy results in insufficient improvement, it may be that government control will be expanded and intensified at the expense of individual freedom in working and consuming, until the whole process becomes revolting to the people or they become subservient to the state.

### A VIEW IN RETROSPECT AND IN PROSPECT

Within a relatively short time the United States has grown from a group of thirteen states along the Atlantic coast into a transcontinental empire with a population forty times as great as that of 1776. Through agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, it has become the richest country in the world. The material standard of living has been, until recently, both rich and generally shared. Population has ceased, however, to grow with the rapidity typical of the generation preceding the World War, and it is many years now since great tracts of virgin land were available. Immediately prior to 1929, our economy was seeking stabilization and security rather than dynamic expansion. Times were already changing.

Ten years of almost uninterrupted depression have weakened the confidence of millions of the inhabitants of this country. Voices are raised against the waste of natural resources during all those years once hailed as prosperous. People chal-



lenge the wisdom of former leaders, both business and political, under whose management—or mismanagement—the country was allowed to sink into the depression. The competitive system and free individual enterprise, once accepted as the causes of innovations and progress in an economic system, are now denounced. Government control and regulation are demanded.

There is no doubt that something needs to be done. Our natural resources are abundant; labor is ample; capital is practically unlimited; and yet our business system is not functioning "normally." Apparently the need is to adjust American business to new social and political ideas; to secure friendly understanding and acceptance of new relationships between government and business, between management and labor, and between different groups of organized labor. Fundamental, however, to a satisfactory solution of our problems are intelligent and far-sighted answers to these questions: How is the business system henceforth to be controlled? Who shall direct it—government officers, managers of great corporations, owner-managers of small concerns, leaders of the great labor organizations, or some combination from among these types? And, finally, on what plan of distributive justice shall annual income be apportioned? While these questions remain unanswered, the American economy must continue to falter.

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## ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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IN AN EARLIER CHAPTER mention was made of the wide social implications of the Industrial Revolution. It is in the field of social conditions and social relations that most of our contemporary economic problems lie. All countries that felt the impact of the Revolution found themselves face to face with a force deeply disturbing to the equilibrium of existing social organizations and institutions, within which both group and individual adjustments had been established by long usage. More than any other single development in history, the Industrial Revolution disturbed the lives of the great masses of people. It was, and is, at once the basis for great achievements and dismal failures. To its achievements and failures, especially where they have issued in serious social and economic problems, we now turn.

Conditions following the introduction of machine power were at their worst during the period of transition from the domestic to the factory system, in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Many of the evils of that period have long since been corrected by legislation. It is therefore not pertinent to the present discussion to review conditions prevailing then, but it is a matter of interest from our vantage point in the twentieth century to take a backward glance at contrasting attitudes in England toward the new machine age. Many



observers looked upon the introduction of machinery as a deliverance of mankind. It was to mean relief from drudgery, with more leisure and a higher standard of living and a richer participation in the advantages of civilization. Feeling among the working class was much less hopeful. "The men of Lancashire and Yorkshire felt of this new power that it was inhuman, that it disregarded all their instincts and sensibilities, that it brought into their lives an inexorable force, destroying and scattering their customs, their traditions, their freedom, their ties of family and home, their dignity and character as men and women. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Of the hopes entertained more than a century ago some have been fulfilled for millions now living. As to the fears of the men of Lancashire and Yorkshire, some of them have disappeared as new generations of workers in the intervening years have become adjusted to the changed environment introduced by power machinery; others have lingered on down to our own day, for men have become victims in a number of ways to the "inexorable force" of the machines.

### THE MACHINE AND THE MAN

The introduction of the factory system following the Industrial Revolution radically changed the life of the working classes. Prior to the Revolution, manufacturing had been carried on in the separate homes or in small shops; the workers owned their tools; the conditions of work were largely of their own making. Even under the domestic system, which, it is true, had separated worker from product, there was still room for individuality and the expression of personality. The worker in the home might engage in two or three occupations. He did, in fact, usually combine a certain amount of farming or gardening with the prosecution of his craft. But with the rise of the factory, conditions of work were completely altered. It brought into existence the capitalist, owner of the factory, owner of machinery, employer of labor; he it

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<sup>1</sup>J. H. and Barbara Hammond, *The Town Labourer* (Longmans, Green and Company, 1917), p. 18.

was who henceforth was to dictate the conditions of work. Both men and the machines they operated were agents of production; both were important from the standpoint of output; too often both were regarded impersonally in terms of future profits. In a sense, the machines were more highly regarded, since their failure to operate efficiently meant a loss in capital, while the breakdown of a man meant nothing more than his discharge and the employment of another man. This impersonal relation between employer and employee that came to exist after the Industrial Revolution is one of the "dismal failures" of that Revolution. It has been the source and the cause of the innumerable disputes between capital and labor.

The extension of the factory system has meant the standardization of work as well as of products. The worker repeats endlessly a mechanical process which is easily learned and which hardly ever varies. Originality has become a lost quality in most work. The psychological effects of this extreme specialization are in many cases very harmful to the worker. The words of Adam Smith, written more than a century and a half ago, sound prophetic now: "The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple tasks . . . generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become." A man living under such conditions of work becomes something less than a human being; he is instead a cog in a machine, endlessly performing operations which in themselves have no meaning and in which he can ordinarily feel no pride. Yet this everlasting repetition of a simple task constitutes a major part of his life; his character and outlook on life are conditioned by the particular requirements of a machine; his psychological make-up tends to conform to it. Ideally, the problem should be solved by making the machine conform to the basic make-up of human beings, instead of the reverse. Obviously, since repetitious effort is bound to be dull and meaningless, and since the machine is here to stay, there is little possibility of making the factory hand's work interesting and vital. His burdens can perhaps be moderately lightened by conditions of sanitation, rest periods, vacations, and congenial working environment: but tasks, per-

sonally meaningless, will remain to be performed. Perhaps the most substantial solution lies in the direction of shorter hours—a possibility conditioned on increased efficiency in production. Here, indeed, is a most hopeful outlook. At the present time the production of the world is considerably less than it might be; that is, industry is still inefficient and wasteful. With the available machinery, land, labor, and knowledge of the arts, the world can possibly double its present production by scientific management and the smoothing out of the economic kinks in the system. And with future progress in labor-saving devices, with their resulting increases in production, it is reasonable to suppose that the present output of an eight- or nine-hour day and a six-day week can be maintained on the basis of a very short working day—perhaps four hours—and a short working week—perhaps four days. This decrease in the time spent in industry would permit a great cultural expansion in the working man's life. It is decidedly a possibility, the realization of which depends on a more capable organization of the industrial processes.

The idea that future progress of labor-saving devices will enable a worker to produce more in a given number of hours, or as much in fewer hours, must be viewed with caution. The statement must not be stretched to mean that at any point hours can be reduced without a decrease in production. To decrease hours means ordinarily to decrease output. Only over a period of time, as new machines are invented and new methods of work utilized, can men work fewer hours and produce as much as formerly. How far a reduction of hours can be pressed without seriously reducing output is a question difficult to answer. The question is more than academic in the United States at the present writing; for in the Fair Standards Labor Act of 1938, Congress limited the work periods of industrial workers engaged in interstate commerce to forty-four hours a week during the first year's operation of the Act, and to forty hours a week in 1940 and thereafter. What its effect will be only the future can tell. All that need be indicated here is that at any point of time a reduction of hours ordinarily means less production; men cannot today produce



as much in six hours as yesterday they produced in eight. This rule does not always hold, however. For example, suppose a man works fourteen hours a day. This long stretch may lead to excess fatigue. If he worked only twelve hours, the loss of two hours might be offset by a decrease in fatigue and a consequent gain in output. For the same reason he might be able to produce more in ten hours than in twelve. But somewhere there is a limit to the increase in output through a reduction in hours and to a consequent gain in productivity. Broadly speaking, the reduction in hours that has taken place over the years, unaccompanied by a reduction in output, has been possible because of the development of labor-saving devices. Ordinarily, just reducing hours will, in and of itself, decrease, not increase, output.

The acceptance of this general principle does not dispose of the question necessarily. In the presence of certain social problems a reduction of hours by law may be a wise measure. This proposition may be clarified by imagining a reverse action. Suppose we increase the working day with the result that production also increases. There would then be more wealth for distribution; the standard of living would rise. But the human cost of this higher standard of living would be extra hours of work. It may be that the gain (greater productivity) is more than offset by the loss (extra hours of work). And reversely, a reduction of hours leading to a decrease in production might be a loss more than offset by the gain in leisure brought about by the shorter workday.

### UNEMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL WARFARE

Another impressive fact arising out of the very nature of the capitalistic system of production in its present form is that, although there has been a great increase in total wealth and although the standard of living has improved, large numbers of men are propertyless. They depend for their existence on their jobs—their only source of income. But unemployment is widespread and recurrent, and in most cases it is impossible for the wage earner to save enough during a prosperous period to

make provisions for the proverbial, and almost certain, rainy day. And because most jobs are repetitious, requiring merely energy and constancy of attention, young men and women are constantly replacing the older and more experienced workers. Many concerns do not hire men beyond forty years of age. For one reason or another, the retention of a job has become increasingly difficult. Fear is a constant element in our working class. Not without foundation is this anxiety so prevalent among the manual workers. In every country where the Industrial Revolution has made inroads, unemployment exists in periods of prosperity as well as in periods of depression.

### **Sources of the problem**

Unemployment is defined as involuntary idleness on the part of those physically and mentally able to work. Some of us carelessly suppose that unemployment is the fault of the worker, that anyone who wants a job can get one. This is an absurd idea. We must admit that unemployment is due not to individuals—employers or employees—but to some fault in the economic system. Whereas under medieval economy the economic relationships were direct, personal, self-sufficient, now there are impersonal contacts between employer and employee. Is business good? Then hire some more men. Is it dull? Discharge some. An employee in a large factory is only a number. The problem in hiring labor is merely a comparison between the wages of the laborer and the value of what he produces. This unfortunate situation is not a reflection on the humanity of the employer. It is probably true that the wages he pays and the employment policy he pursues are imposed by the competitive regime under which he conducts his business. He, like the employee, is caught in a system and necessarily follows the routine procedure. He must watch his cost of production—and labor is just one item in this cost—or fail to continue as a producer. He must make his investment earn dividends for himself and other stockholders.

The same relentless pressure of competition forces the employer to utilize such labor-saving devices as he can afford to install. The result is technological unemployment—that is,

unemployment resulting from the displacing of men by improved machinery or changes in the organization of the plant. It is possible, of course, that some of the workers so displaced may find their way into other fields of employment. Moreover, new inventions create as well as undermine employment. The new machinery which may have displaced thousands, itself required workers to make it. And such additions to the technical world as radios and airplanes have provided thousands of men with new kinds of employment. Nevertheless, labor-saving devices sometimes multiply so fast that many more are discharged from certain occupations than can be absorbed in other occupations. But whatever may be the resulting ills to the workers, it is evident that so far as the employer is concerned he is simply trying to keep up with the procession in a competitive business world. That is his problem. Any serious lagging behind is likely to mean his elimination in the struggle. On the other side is the worker. He, too, has his problem. His problem is to get all he can to maintain his inadequate standard of living and, if possible, to raise it. With nothing but the rewards of his labor to depend upon, the wage scale and recurrent periods of unemployment become the major factors in his problem of existence.

Labor-saving devices are only one cause of unemployment; the business cycle, considered in the following section, is another; and there are still others. What is the solution of the problem of unemployment? Does it lie in the direction of shorter hours, the elimination of monopolies, public works, pump-priming, or what? This is a question too involved and too technical to receive an adequate answer in this short discussion. It is enough for us to point out here that most economists agree that unemployment can be reduced in volume within a capitalistic system, but that its virtually complete elimination is extremely unlikely. Because a considerable amount of unemployment is inevitable even in "prosperous" years, students of social problems have come to advocate unemployment insurance, not so much as a solution for unemployment but as a substitute for the charity the unemployed would otherwise be forced to accept.



In the situation pictured above we have a general explanation of the misunderstandings and strife between employer and worker—a picture of interests and forces growing out of competitive industry, which frequently lead to unemployment and low wages. Who is to blame? Is either side fundamentally at fault? Probably not. Are the interests of employers and employees compatible and their disputes merely the results of misunderstandings? This brief survey forbids a completely demonstrable answer to this question; but from what has been said about production and distribution, it can be seen that they are both compatible and incompatible. Both are, or should be, interested in increasing production; herein lies the compatibility. But on the question of the division of the product (income), the gain of one is the loss of the other; and here their interests are incompatible. Industrial disputes are, therefore, not mere superficial misunderstandings, but basic differences. Where economic survival is precarious, and where a fundamental conflict of interests exists, it is altogether improbable that conciliations can replace antagonisms and conflicts. And actual victory may be a matter of superior fighting power rather than of abstract justice.

#### **Combined action as a labor defense**

The Industrial Revolution had not run far in its course before the workers began to realize that the superior fighting power frequently lay on the side of the employers. The individualistic philosophy dictated freedom of contract as the only acceptable basis for the relations of employer to employee, and the virtues of the practice were duly extolled. But as the worker came to view the matter, his right to sell his labor to the highest bidder and the freedom of the employer to buy labor in the cheapest market meant, in the last analysis, the right of the worker to accept the terms imposed upon him by the employer or to starve. Under ordinary conditions, it was most unlikely that the two sides of the scale should be evenly weighted in a contractual relationship between a powerful employer on one side and an individual workman on the other, whose existence depended upon his getting and keeping

a job. This inequality in bargaining power as it existed in early nineteenth-century England must be understood if we are to get down to the fundamental purposes that lay behind the trade-union movement. It was not merely a matter of inequality in economic power. All political power lay on the side of the employer, for the working classes had no vote at that time; legislation therefore favored the employer at every turn. Nor did the workingman enjoy equality before the law; magistrates and justices of the peace stood squarely behind the landlord and the industrial employers. In fact, a large proportion of the justices and magistrates were themselves landlords or employers, and English records disclose numerous cases of unjust decisions discriminating against the workers. These were the chief sources of inequality. The employer was able to buy labor in the cheapest market because many men were competing for jobs on an individualistic basis. The worker had only the skill and strength of his body to sell, but as an individual he must sell it in the cheapest market. So long as he bargained as an individual he was hopeless.

Largely out of this situation the trade-union movement arose. In England, where this new type of problem emerged with the advance of the technical revolution, the workers initiated a movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century to organize crafts into labor unions for the purpose of collective bargaining with the employers. This assault upon the principle of freedom of contract met with vigorous opposition from the new industrial group. Both English common law and new statutes of Parliament were marshaled against such combinations of the workers. The result was a long struggle to legalize labor unions and to obtain the right to use them as instruments to increase wages, decrease hours, improve working conditions, and give the workers greater security in their jobs. In England the long-fought contest was not won until 1875. In every country where the Industrial Revolution has made itself felt, trade-unions have sprung up as if the phenomenon were inseparable from the industrial change.

Through the amalgamation of allied crafts into giant organizations, strikes may take the form of industrial war-

fare waged on wide fronts, involving thousands of workers. Industrial warfare of this sort may be no less serious than military warfare; it means great losses and suffering to employees, possible bankruptcy to employers, discontinuation of services to the public, and even loss of life to the combatants. In the United States, the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 is designed to reduce the number of these strikes which have their origin in the failure of employers to recognize and negotiate with the representatives of the workers.

While combinations of workers through the organization of trade-unions have not eliminated industrial warfare, they have, as many believe, operated to prevent many such struggles; for the working class has learned that in many cases it is far more valuable to use their combined strength for bargaining in a spirit of compromise than to stake all on the problematical outcome of a strike. No one taking an unprejudiced view of industrial history can doubt the great benefits that have accrued to labor through an organization that has tended to equalize the fighting and bargaining power of employers and employees. In the United States the evils perpetrated by labor organizations have been numerous, but it is the belief of many economists that these evils are not an argument for the elimination of strong labor unions; rather they indicate the need of an improvement in their morale and of a deeper realization of social responsibility.

The development of unionism among the workers is viewed by some students as a necessary supplement to political democracy. They say that there must be economic or industrial democracy as well as political democracy. When the agitation for political democracy was at its height, it was conscientiously believed by many of its thoughtful advocates that the ballot in the hands of the depressed classes would prove to be the instrument by which they, through governmental action, would attain economic security. Experience has indicated, however, that political democracy under a capitalistic system may degenerate into little more than a formality. Legislation may represent powerful class interests rather than the conscience of the majority. The power of wealth may



be utilized for selfish aggrandizement rather than for social well-being. A small but rich group of industrialists may combine to boost prices; or an employer may take advantage of the worker's everlasting dependence on the job, to depress his wages. For these reasons the conviction has arisen among many critical observers that the workers must be given a position of greater influence and power as a check upon these evils, and it is argued that the combined action of the workers in labor unions will provide greater opportunity to exert such influence. It is also urged that industrial democracy should be promoted by admitting the representatives of labor to some share in the management of industry.

The organized workers have been demanding a voice in management as a recognition both of the indispensable part they play in industry and of their dignity as individuals. Arguments against this demand offered by capitalists run to the effect (1) that since the employer owns the business he alone has the right to run it; and (2) that a combined management of employer and employee—a dual control—is apt to result in inefficiency. Against these arguments the worker says that since his very life is tied up with the fortunes of the business, since it cannot proceed without him, since his self-respect is impaired by being solely under the direction and whim of one who happens to own capital, and since the elimination of these evils would be conducive to higher morale and therefore greater rather than less efficiency, he should be permitted to participate in the control and direction of business.

### **Specific aims of trade-unions**

Toward what ends do trade-unions use their power of collective bargaining? What do they hope to accomplish for their members? An answer to these questions leads us to a consideration of two somewhat contrasting points of view. The more conservative unions, both in the United States and in England, have limited aspirations: greater security, higher wages, and shorter hours. These attainments they hope to realize within the framework of the capitalistic system. Less conservative unions, in addition to these specific objectives, see

as their task the reconstruction of society even, some of them would maintain, if such reconstruction involves the abandonment of capitalism. Let us examine the organizations representative of both of these points of view. First we shall consider the conservative unions which are concerned with the here and now—with security, wages, and hours.

The American Federation of Labor typifies an organization which accepts the capitalistic system and strives to get specific gains for its members within that system. As far back as 1883 one of the A.F.L. leaders summarized the philosophy of his organization, a philosophy which it still holds: "We are going on from day to day—fighting for immediate objects that can be realized in a few years." The A.F.L., it is true, occasionally talks in terms of wide objectives, such as the redistribution of income, social reform, and federal legislation as a supplement to trade agreements. Nevertheless we must determine the philosophy of an organization by its deeds rather than by its official pronouncements. In terms of its deeds, the A.F.L. may be properly thought of as an organization which accepts the economic society that now prevails and contemplates only such changes as are not inconsistent with its basic pattern.

A partial explanation of the A.F.L. position may be found in the personnel of its membership. The majority of the members are skilled craftsmen: carpenters, masons, plumbers, and others in the building trades; printers; and railroad workers. These workers are not a cross section of American labor. The A.F.L. has never embraced the vast army of unskilled or semiskilled workers in the mass-production industries: rubber, steel, automobiles, aluminum, etc. It is not unfair to think of the A.F.L. as the representative of only the aristocracy of American labor—skilled craftsmen in the high-wage brackets.

A broader program of action is represented by the aims of a newcomer among labor organizations in the United States, the Congress of Industrial Organizations. While the C.I.O. embraces the specific aims of the A.F.L., it also sets up a broader objective. This broader objective is the unionization of *all* labor. To attain this objective the C.I.O., in contrast to the

A.F.L., endorses the industrial rather than the craft type of union. A craft union is referred to as *horizontal* in structure; all members are on the same level of skill and perform the same type of work regardless of the industry in which they are employed; the horizontal union embraces, that is, workers of one craft but many industries as, for example, carpenters. An industrial union, on the other hand, is *vertical*; it includes workers of all kinds—from the least skilled upward to the most skilled—employed in one industry; for example, the clothing union has jurisdiction over examiners, cutters, finishers, operators, pattern workers, etc. It is probably true that most workers nowadays are industrial rather than craft conscious; they think of themselves as associated with an industry rather than with a particular type of skill. Through the industrial type of organization, the C.I.O. hopes to unionize a large percentage of workers and to attain a more effective weapon of collective bargaining than is possible under the craft basis of the A.F.L.

If the C.I.O. does succeed in organizing the majority of American laborers into strong industrial unions, it will have brought about a shift in economic power from a relatively small group of employers to a large underlying population. The attainment of power by the rank and file, however, does not necessarily imply the solution of problems which directly affect them. But this much is clear: a shift in power from a privileged few to large numbers of workers would mean, for good or ill, a new direction for society—new aims, new methods, new results. It is easy to sense a change; it is difficult to predict its exact nature and its future outcome.

### THE BUSINESS CYCLE

A factor, serious and widespread in its disturbing effects upon the stability of employment and upon the general health of our whole economic life, is the so-called business cycle, one of the most exasperating characteristics of modern business, both in the United States and abroad.

Western contemporary society is vast in its wealth and pro-



ductive capacity, a productive capacity which, if well coordinated, would produce a steady flow of income for all. Yet, about every five years, on the average, economic activities run a course from prosperity to crisis (or recession), and from depression to revival. The elaborate, complex, and individualistic system gets out of order, not occasionally and spasmodically but at more or less regular intervals. Thus we are faced with the paradoxical situation in which prosperity has in it the roots of a depression, and depression the roots of prosperity. It is as if good health were an indication of oncoming illness, and illness an indication of oncoming good health. Instead of a condition of regular and healthy business activity, where all the productive resources of the country are utilized in the most efficient manner, we proceed on a zigzag course. Here is a problem absorbing the attention of the best minds—to attain economic processes so well coördinated that business activity will be regular and continuous rather than fitful and disturbing.

It would be easy enough to understand a business depression as a result of a war, or a crop failure, or an epidemic of disease. But the "business cycle" is largely independent of these random factors and seems to be a fundamental characteristic of our competitive capitalistic system; that is, the very characteristics of the business economy—freedom of enterprise, specialization, and the roundabout method of production—generate the cycle. Wherever business is highly developed—in America, in Europe, or in Asia—the cycle occurs with regularity. Each cycle differs from all the others as a result of special temporary circumstances, but all of them have fundamental likenesses.

The importance of the problem is apparent to anyone with even the most casual knowledge of history. In the United States, the years 1818, 1825, 1837, 1847, 1873, 1884, 1893, 1907, 1910, 1913, 1929, 1937 are the years in which there was a major shift from prosperity to depression, and in other years there were depressions of less significance. The depression which began in 1929 was more severe than any other in the history of the world, and its special nature was probably the result

of certain random factors, such as the World War, unusually rapid technological changes, and the agricultural maladjustment. But the depression may well have occurred entirely apart from these random factors, though in less severe form. Alternations of prosperity and depression are apparently the result of forces inseparable from the workings of our present individualistic economy, these forces more or less periodically giving rise to recurrent maladjustments.

The economic depressions that constitute one phase of the business cycle are at once the most baffling problem that an industrial society has to contend with and the most formidable obstacle to the maintenance of desirable standards of living. Long periods of unemployment mean incalculable losses in productive power, which are as truly a loss of wealth as would be the case if millions of tons of goods and products were dumped into the sea. Millions of men and women become dependent upon charity, a fact which destroys self-respect and saps the morale. Savings of a lifetime are swept away, ownership in homes and farms is lost. Banks collapse, business establishments of all sorts are driven into bankruptcy. What has happened, when men go in want of clothing and food while warehouses are filled with goods and foodstuffs? In the final analysis it means that large portions of society have become separated from the direct sources of supply—the land itself—by an intricate social machinery. When that machinery breaks down men are brought face to face with want. How to prevent these periodic collapses is a vital problem which challenges contemporary society.

### THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME UNDER CAPITALISM

The Industrial Revolution should be judged not by its immediate effects but rather by the long-run changes in society which it stimulated. It is axiomatic in the study of economics that rapid industrial changes, though possibly desirable on the whole and in the long view, create in the transitional process grave maladjustments. Thus, the introduction of a labor-saving device causes temporary unemployment, but ultimately

is the means of increasing the income of society. Conversely, a great city fire is a blessing to those who are temporarily provided with the work of rebuilding, but obviously it is an economic loss when considered in relation to society, since there has been actual destruction of wealth. Economics is replete with illustrations of events which in the main are desirable, but which are attended by evils to specific groups; and, conversely, of events which are beneficial to specific groups, but harmful when considered broadly. So far as machine production is concerned, it is obvious that it has drawn in its wake a train both of blessings and of iniquities; as to which have predominated, opinion will probably differ.

Production has become roundabout, or capitalistic. This means that instead of our agents of production being utilized for the creation of consumers' goods, they are directed, in the first instance, toward the creation of producers' equipment or instrumental capital—tools, machines, factories, etc. The deferring of immediate gratifications in the form of consumable goods means the creation of instrumental capital; and this capital in the end makes possible a greater output of consumable goods and a consequent rise in the general standard of living; for, it is to be noted, the production of society is the income of society, and it is this production or income which is distributed to the various claimants—landlords, laborers, managers, and capitalists.

But in spite of this rise in the standard of living, there have come about great inequalities in the incomes of individuals; so that poverty and riches exist side by side. There are slums and mansions often within close range of each other. Inequalities tend to perpetuate themselves; the children, by and large, assume the economic status of the parents. Nor does it follow from the fact of the existence of great wealth that its acquisition has resulted from great service to the community; this may be the case, but frequently there is little relation between large incomes and public service. Nor is it necessarily true that the receiver of a small income is not of very great service socially. It is safe to say that in many cases the financial standing of an individual is the result of accidental circum-



stances, of which equivalent contribution to public welfare may not be one; conceivably, if great incomes did represent great service there might be some justification for the present inequalities. But how to effect a more equal distribution in which the very low incomes shall be increased and the very high ones lowered is a practical question in applied economics which it is beyond our province to consider here.

A brief summary of the statistics on the distribution of income in the United States is enough to give us a picture of the situation. In the prosperous year 1929, two-thirds of the total income-receivers obtained incomes of less than \$1,500 a year. Nine-tenths of all those receiving incomes in that year obtained less than \$2,500. At the other extreme, 1.3 per cent of the income-receivers obtained \$10,000 or more. This group is small, but it obtained in 1929 twenty-five per cent of the national income.

The picture of income in the United States in 1929 was not unique. In all those countries of western Europe where capitalism prevailed, the degree of inequality was substantially the same. This was true because the same forces that led to inequality here existed in other capitalistic countries. In Communist Russia, however, a considerable degree of equality in the distribution of income was brought about. The results of Fascism in Germany and Italy in this regard are not yet clear from the available data. Presumably, however, the changes in these countries will not be great since Fascism, unlike communism, is not preoccupied with the task of redistributing income in the direction of greater equality.

Although the individualist system under modern capitalism has contributed heavily to the unequal distribution of income, modern capitalism is obviously not to be charged with sole responsibility for the situation; wide inequalities have existed throughout history. As a matter of fact, even if an absolute equality of incomes could be achieved (incidentally, this would probably be impossible as well as unwise), it would not bring the standard of living for all to as high a point as many think is socially necessary. The fault lies not merely in inadequate distribution; we must have more to distribute, more to divide.

That is, we must increase our production. The two major economic problems are, therefore, to find ways to increase production, and to insure a more equitable distribution of what is produced.

Wide inequalities in the distribution of income have produced serious problems of poverty in all industrial countries. Poverty is a social problem not because it signifies wide inequalities in the distribution of earnings and wealth, but because it signifies squalid tenement areas and slums where millions of men, women, and children are forced to carry on an unequal battle against physical and moral deterioration amid degrading surroundings that tend to destroy human dignity. And because poverty does signify such things, it means social unrest and instability. Poverty on so vast a scale, carrying with it consequences of profound social significance, has ceased to be a matter of private charity and has become one of serious public concern.

Recognizing these facts and the political expediency of relief measures, some governments turned in the latter part of the nineteenth century to comprehensive schemes of social legislation. Working conditions were improved, hours of employment were limited, and minimum wages were in some cases fixed by law. Government insurance schemes were put into force to provide compensation for sickness, accident, unemployment, old age, and death. Social legislation of this sort has become commonplace in the industrial countries of Europe and in the British dominions. In the United States, partly by reason of our traditional distrust of all departures from American individualism and partly by reason of a relatively high standard of living among American workmen that has until recent years made the need of governmental regulation less necessary, programs of social legislation have lagged far behind those of Europe. Nevertheless, federal and state ventures have already reached notable proportions. We now have the income and inheritance taxes, which lay the burden of governmental costs upon those most able to bear it. Workmen's compensation and old age and unemployment insurance are now in operation in virtually all parts of the United States.

### AGRARIAN PROBLEMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Modern agriculture is intimately and delicately articulated with the industrial and financial activities of society; the three have become interdependent factors in our economic life. In consequence, agriculture has felt the disturbing effects of the World War no less than other forms of industry. Conqueror and conquered alike find that the comparatively normal routine of agriculture has been so roughly upset that readjustment is costing years of anxiety and human suffering. The Middle Ages were marked by almost perpetual war, which impoverished medieval society; but when a local conflict was over, the customary economic life was quickly resumed. Now, war not only impoverishes the world but upsets it so profoundly that years are required to bring its complicated machinery of production and consumption back into satisfactory adjustment.

During the World War, Europe offered a larger market for American wheat and other foodstuffs than ever before, thus stimulating here an abnormally large production to meet the foreign demand. The farmers were able to sell their products at high prices, and there was a great expansion of farming enterprises. At the end of the conflict the European demand fell off, with a resulting drop in prices for wheat and other agricultural produce to a ruinous level. There exists in the United States today a condition of overexpansion in some divisions of agriculture which makes it impossible for farmers to get a normal return on their investments. Should such a condition exist in the manufacture of a particular product, such as radios, the prevailing low prices would induce some business leaders to curtail output of that product, or even to discontinue the business and direct their resources into some other field. Thus the supply would be decreased and overproduction checked. But the high degree of mobility in industry does not prevail in agriculture. Farmers tend to remain farmers, even though reduced to a starvation level.

When in 1921 prices of farm products fell faster than prices of other commodities, the farmers clamored for protective



legislation. Various laws were passed by Congress to alleviate the farmers' distress, perhaps the most conspicuous of which was the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. This law provided for the curtailment in production of wheat, corn, cotton, and hogs. The purpose of reducing output was to raise prices thereby for the benefit of the farmer. In 1933 the country was treated to the amazing spectacle of the slaughter of thousands of brood sows and young pigs, a deliberate destruction of wealth aimed at benefiting the agricultural class. Such a reduction in the supply of hogs did, indeed, raise the price of pork and may have benefited the farmers. But if the destruction of farm goods was a solution to the agricultural problem, it was a solution fundamentally uneconomic. For, from a long-run point of view and for all classes of society, we can hardly bring prosperity by destroying wealth. Nevertheless, what is fundamentally uneconomic in the long run and for society as a whole may conceivably be justified as a short-run emergency measure. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, subsequently declared unconstitutional, may have been unwise even as a short-run measure, but we cannot examine the merits of the law here. All that need be noted now is that in our complex world there is frequently a conflict between one class and another and between short-run and long-run policies.

Other methods of agricultural relief are still being studied and it is quite evident that the agricultural situation is now taken seriously by Congress as a matter so closely bound up with the material welfare of the country as to demand attention. In other words, a basic branch of our economic life hitherto left largely to shift for itself has been definitely drawn into the field of government intervention in a positive way. Much depends upon the success or failure of efforts to find a solution for the farmers' problem. A reasonably healthy state of agriculture is of fundamental importance to our economic life, but is not to be hoped for so long as the farmer is compelled to sell his products below the actual cost of production. It is under such conditions that mortgages eat up the land, and independent owners of the soil become tenants of absentee

owners. Such a condition also has its social repercussions; signs are already appearing of a growing schism between urban and rural populations. In some of the European countries a growing agrarian solidarity is observable, and new radical political alignments are emerging.

### THE REACTION AGAINST THE INDIVIDUALISTIC SYSTEM

Material progress has been the watchword and the proud boast of contemporary society. In his alliance with science and machinery, modern man has demonstrated a capacity to produce wealth beyond that of any other period in history. Despite this impressive fact we have the spectacle of a society perplexed and harassed by wide areas of poverty and distress in practically every country. This condition, as already pointed out, is a chronic condition. It exists in good times and in bad times. Depressions greatly aggravate the condition, and bring it out into the open in so threatening an aspect that society is compelled to take notice and to resort to extraordinary means to keep the social order from collapsing; but the condition, in varying degrees of seriousness, is always present, depression or no depression. This anomalous situation lies at the root of the critical and questioning attitude taken during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries toward the individualistic or so-called capitalistic system.

#### Socialism versus individualism

Plenty of evidence appears in these pages to indicate that during the last hundred years individuals, groups, and governments have been conscious of the unhappy results of some of the workings of capitalism. Labor organizations, proposals for introducing industrial democracy, a conspicuous movement toward social legislation of all sorts, taxes on incomes and inheritance—these are all evidence of efforts that have been and are being made to establish satisfactory checks on the injurious tendencies of individualism. It is to be observed, however, that all these proposals, movements, and changes in policy have presupposed the continuance of the capitalistic system. Their

aim has been, not to overthrow it, but to find ways of eliminating what is bad without destroying what is regarded as unquestionably good. That these intentions have not been rewarded with a satisfactory degree of success is the primary explanation of the steady growth of a more radical movement bent, not on the preservation, but on the destruction of capitalism as the only effective means of solving our economic and social problems. The movement is socialism—devoted, in its moderate forms, to the idea that the change should come slowly through a process of education and by constitutional methods, and, in its extreme form, to the conviction that capitalism can be destroyed only by revolution.

### **Socialism**

The basic conflict between socialism and capitalism has been indicated elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Here we are interested in socialism, not as a political doctrine, but as a theory diametrically opposed to the existing individualistic order in our economic life. In this respect socialism is not only pertinent but extremely important in our discussion of economic problems. The powerful capitalists who arose with the new industrialism were the strong supporters of the laissez-faire doctrine; consequently capitalism came to be identified with economic individualism. That doctrine, as we have seen, is founded on the conviction that the prosperity and general well-being of society can be attained best if the individual is given the maximum of liberty in the pursuit of economic interest. Socialists, on the other hand, hold that experience proves that such liberty means the freedom of a powerful minority—the capitalists—to exploit the majority—the workers—with resulting widespread poverty and degradation of the masses. The fundamental error, according to the socialists, lies in the controlling emphasis on the liberty of the individual rather than on the welfare of society as a whole.

Fundamentally, therefore, the socialists' attack is directed at the individualistic system as it has worked out under capitalism. In its operation, individualism produces a society in

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 385-387; 701-704.



which economic activity receives its impulse and direction from numberless centers; each center—individual, partnership, corporation—is intent upon its own business interests or profits. It sees its interests or profits largely in the light of its own narrowly circumscribed circle of operations. Under such a regime, the socialist argues, economic life becomes anarchic. There is no unified controlling authority that has power to direct production and consumption along channels that minister to the wants of society as a whole. With the major interest centered on individual profits rather than on social needs, the greater part of the wealth produced under capitalism goes to the few who control production, and the buying power of the mass of workers is so reduced that they are unable to procure the goods they require. As a result the balance between production and consumption is destroyed, and society experiences what is termed “overproduction.” When this kind of “overproduction” becomes serious enough, the machinery of industry slows down and in many businesses stops altogether, and society enters a depression, in which men may starve and go ragged in the midst of plenty.

The foregoing statement, in oversimplified form, presents the root evil of the existing economic system, as the socialist views it. Thus the socialist defines the major factor in the inequitable distribution of income and in the periodic calamities incidental to the business cycle. What the socialist demands, therefore, is a comprehensive social control of the instruments of production, the elimination of private profits, and the substitution of social needs as the guiding motive in the directing of our economic life; he can see no lasting virtue in the kind of government regulation which attempts through social legislation to prop up a structure which he regards as fundamentally bad.

The first experiment with socialism on a national scale began in Russia in 1917. What light does this experiment throw on the merits of socialism?<sup>1</sup> For several reasons this is a difficult question to answer. In the first place, communism in Russia

<sup>1</sup>It is permissible to speak of Russian communism as one kind of socialism. See pp. 701-702.

is relatively young, and it may in time take on a considerably different appearance. For example, it is at least theoretically possible that Russian communism will acquire a politically democratic base. Another fact that makes it difficult to evaluate communism is that since 1917 Russia has become industrialized and has accumulated large amounts of mechanical equipment. Two dramatic facts, in other words, have altered the character of the previously economically backward country: communism and an industrial revolution. If the Russian standard of living has risen since 1917, has the rise been due to something inherent in the shift from individualism to communism, or to the shift from primitive techniques of production to machine techniques? If the rise in the standard of living is due to the latter, then little light is thrown on the merits of communism. We must not credit to communism (or to capitalism) something which is due to an outside factor. Unfortunately, it is not easy to disentangle the forces of communism from those of industrial change.

### Fascism

Italian Fascism and German Nazism represent another form of dictatorship. As political systems Fascism and Nazism are discussed elsewhere in this volume; our present interest calls for an economic approach so far as economic features can be distinguished from political, for the two are intimately related. Although Fascism and Nazism differ in a few important respects,<sup>1</sup> Italy and Germany—and their imitators also—are commonly referred to as “fascist” states. In this discussion “Fascist” or “Fascism” will be used to designate the type of economic philosophy represented by Italy and Germany.

Both of these forms of dictatorship arose in large measure out of unbearable economic situations partially resulting from the chaotic conditions following the World War. The political revolt against democratic institutions had its main roots in dissatisfaction over the apparent inability of democratic governments to improve the economic situation. In both countries many saw in democracy the enemy of order and discipline in

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 710-712.

society and of efficiency in government. At the same time, these movements were a revolt against what they regarded as an insufficiently regulated capitalism. A political dictatorship was acceptable in preference to a democracy because it provided centralized authority and a political mechanism capable of swift and comprehensive regulation of social and economic life. Thus under German and Italian fascism, as under Russian communism, one basic aim is to control and direct the national economy to avoid the pitfalls of unregulated capitalism.

However, socialism as established in Russia and the dictatorships established in Italy and Germany contrast with each other in a number of particulars. Russian communism represents itself as completely rejecting the capitalistic system as we know it in such countries as Great Britain, France, and the United States, while the Italian and German dictatorships seek to preserve, in outward form at least, certain features of capitalism: private property and freedom of enterprise prevail though subject to restrictions incomparably greater than those under capitalism. Unlike the Russian government, too, the Italian and German governments do not seek to effectuate a substantially equal distribution of income. To them the national state is the supreme social end. Let us raise the standard of living and bring economic security, say the fascist dictators, but let these objectives be secondary to a higher one—the exaltation and strengthening of the state. If we can provide a higher standard of living and economic security, so much the better. But these things are as nothing compared to the prestige, the power and glory of our native land. Individuals are nothing; it is the state and only the state that counts.

It is evident from this limited description that Fascism, in both theory and practice, is utterly inconsistent with American traditions, in its economic system as well as in its political system. What have these changes brought in the way of compensation? An adequate answer would require a book in itself. And after the evaluation was made it would be necessary, in a fair presentation, to look at results from the point of view of the people of those states as well as from our own. How far have they solved their economic problems? That,



too, is a difficult question. No one can deny that the change has brought great material benefits in the way of vast public works, some of which are, or will be, of great productive power in the future. But so far as an improvement in the standard of living is concerned, results thus far have not been encouraging. So many factors have entered in to affect their economic progress—including military and foreign policy—that it is very difficult, indeed hardly possible, to determine how much economic gain is to be attributed to the abandonment of prewar institutions. One thing is clear—if these fascist systems succeed in achieving economic security and a higher standard of living, they will do so at the expense of freedom of enterprise and a consequent departure to that extent from the principle of capitalism; they would also do so at the expense of what are to us supremely important ideals of personal liberty. The same can be said of communism.

### **Economic planning**

The growing strength and hostility of the socialistic opposition to the capitalistic economic order has stimulated some of its defenders to attempt to find a way out. Obviously we cannot go back to the pre-industrial stage. To destroy our machinery would mean a reversion to elementary conditions of production—direct instead of indirect—with a tremendous diminishing of output. A complete reversion to hand labor would mean a sacrifice of the productive capacity of capital and a lowering of our standard of living. Shall we retain our machinery, but give up our present capitalistic system of private ownership and substitute for it the socialistic system? That would mean a fundamental change in the *status quo*, and raise the question as to whether we could produce as much and as efficiently under socialism as under capitalism. If it is assumed that we could, the question still remains: Can socialism really effect a more equal distribution of income once it is produced? These are the fundamental questions of socialism.

Confronted by widespread unemployment and other breakdowns of the capitalistic system, some of those whose interests are definitely bound up with capitalism, and others who believe

strongly that it has demonstrated its worth and must be preserved, are seriously considering the possibilities of finding a compromise between socialism and individualism. It is thought that capitalism could be made to function more satisfactorily if some central planning committee, a government agency, were set up to direct *all or nearly all productive processes*. Could this be done?

No one denies the possibility that a planned economic system might function efficiently, but our question for the moment is whether it is possible to have planned economy and, at the same time, retain capitalism. We have already referred to capitalism as an arrangement the distinctive features of which are free competition, freedom of enterprise, and private property. While it is true that these features do not and never have existed in unadulterated form, the fact remains that they have given our economic life its essential pattern. Now it is proposed by some that economic life be planned—planned so as to prevent those tragic circumstances, of which unemployment is the worst, that manifest themselves so frequently under capitalism.

National economic planning has been defined as "the substitution of conscious supervision and control of economic activity as a whole by the government or its delegated agencies, in place of the present extensive reliance upon the automatic operation of individual self-interest."<sup>1</sup> Such planning contemplates a smooth-functioning economic society and one in which smooth functioning is achieved by national direction and control over labor and capital: the government would decide what goods are to be produced, what per cent of production should constitute equipment for industry, and what per cent should take the form of consumers' goods. The government, that is, would determine into what industries the agents of production are to go. This is another way of saying that comprehensive national planning—the kind which really proposes to go far toward eliminating major economic ills—means the abandonment of at least two features of economic life that

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<sup>1</sup>R. Bye and W. W. Hewett, *Applied Economics* (F. S. Crofts and Company, second revised edition, 1934), p. 659.

are the very essence of capitalism: free competition and freedom of enterprise. Now to abandon freedom of enterprise and free competition may be wise or not; that is not the question of the moment. But it is clear that their relatively complete abandonment means the end of capitalism and the substitution of a fundamentally new economic system. Effective national planning—and, to repeat, this phrase implies much more than mere secondary regulation—is, we conclude, incompatible with capitalism.

Despite the inconsistency between comprehensive planning and a free-enterprise society (capitalism), it may be true that the inevitable economic drift is toward planning. Some critics argue that since planning, though inconsistent with the fundamental nature of capitalism, is going to happen anyway, we might as well recognize the inevitable and adjust ourselves to it. That is, if planning is inevitable, let it be ushered into our society deliberately and consciously so that, though we abandon capitalism, we move into a new economic system that will be the product of preliminary thought and study rather than of the accidental play of circumstances. Some students of social affairs are, however, not convinced of the inevitability of a planned society and believe that our efforts should be directed toward making such changes as are fundamentally consistent with capitalism. Those who are convinced of the possibility of the continuation of capitalism look with favor on such proposals as unemployment insurance and old-age pensions, scientific management, elimination of waste in production, profit-sharing, control of the size of population, control of the business cycle, elimination of protective tariffs, intensive application of the principle of inheritance, income, and land taxes, and countless other proposals. The nature of some of these proposals we have already indicated.

### OUR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN PERSPECTIVE

The economic world has developed from simplicity to complexity, from self-sufficiency to the roundabout method of production represented in its highest development under our



existing economic system. The earlier economic societies possessed the advantage of stability and relative certainty; unless catastrophes like war and physical disturbances intervened, the soil yielded the means of subsistence; and since production and consumption were not far removed from each other, a livelihood was not problematical. There was no complicated social mechanism to get out of order. In contrast, our complex economic order is one of instability and uncertainty. The production of goods nowadays is no guarantee that the producers will be fed; for now goods are produced for sale in anticipation of a demand that may not materialize, with the result that goods are either not sold or are sold at ruinously low prices. Unemployment is just one consequence of such disorder.

Shall we then condemn the Industrial Revolution which is the underlying explanation of this elaborate economic world? Before we answer the question we must remember that although the Revolution made insecurity a normal condition of our day, it has raised standards of living, shortened the working day, and made possible a cultural expansion resting on a surplus of wealth. With all its evils, the present complex system has vastly greater possibilities than the economy preceding it. Such, history shows, is the nature of fundamental economic changes; they are never altogether a blessing or altogether an evil. Certain groups may be affected favorably, others unfavorably. All that can be said of such changes is that they are not wholly good, or wholly bad. It is in such a light that we must view the Industrial Revolution.

We shall be aided in evaluating its results if we reduce economic activity to its simplest terms. In the last analysis, most economic problems come down to two considerations: How much can be produced and how efficiently can this production be distributed? Neither problem is, as yet, adequately solved. That production has been immensely increased over that of the pre-industrial period no one denies; but that we could produce immensely more by the elimination of avoidable waste, every careful observer admits. Since the world's income is the world's production, we can increase that income only by the

continuous, smooth functioning of all the elements of the economic process. Idle labor or idle capital means economic loss and signifies that we are not producing as much as we might. But whatever the total production, it must somehow be distributed. Distributed it is, but in too uneven a fashion. Given a certain amount to go round, then more to one man means less to another. And, as was observed earlier in this discussion, inequalities in the distribution of income are not necessarily just. High incomes do not always mean that the recipients have rendered social services correspondingly high, or low incomes that the recipients have contributed but little to the welfare of the community.

If modern economic productivity lags behind its possibilities and the distribution of our production is open to serious criticism, is society helpless to correct existing defects? Rigid devotion to the *status quo* may be one of the most serious obstacles to desirable changes. What has been the regular and habitual procedure during our lifetime we tend to take for granted as the only possible way of doing things. Our activities are adjusted to certain institutions. But are not institutions man-made, and does not all history indicate that they are subject to change? Must we sanctify current procedure? Human beings may be unable to cope with certain adverse manifestations of nature, but we ought never to admit surrender to our own social creations—to institutions. In this latter case, what is done can be undone.

This simple statement of the problem does not mean that the solution is equally simple. The whole discussion in this chapter is a negation of such a conclusion. Important economic problems are complex and difficult because they are never single, isolated problems; they are aspects of broader questions. Essentially, the social sciences are concerned with human behavior; one aspect of that behavior is economic. The complete understanding of past or current behavior in any given instance requires explorations beyond the economic field into the political, sociological, historical, and psychological fields, and in some cases into those of the natural sciences. Reparations and war debts, for example, are more than technical

economic subjects; to be intelligently understood as problems, they must be viewed in the light of political and historical complications, perhaps in the light of the psychological setting with which they have come to be associated. To conclude that they can be settled on the basis of the simple formula that they are honest debts and must be paid like all other honest debts is a mischievous delusion.

Finally, it must be emphasized that economics is a technical subject. In this section dealing with the descent of economic institutions, an attempt has been made to clarify the broad movements in the development of our economic life rather than to pass judgment on specific aspects of that development. Such a study should not be viewed as a handbook of rules of action. While it may have aided in the formulation of a general attitude or philosophy, it cannot determine for the reader just what action he as a citizen should take in judging a particular situation. For example, the brief discussion of the farm problem in the United States has, it is hoped, made clear certain maladjustments that complicate the situation. But the exact technique for overcoming those maladjustments depends on a broad technical knowledge of the matter not only in its economic aspects but also in its wide social and political ramifications. A philosophy of the economic world is far from being a rule of action.

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## POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: THE STATE

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**W**HAT IS the fundamental social need that has brought political institutions into existence? At the risk of oversimplification of a rather vague term one might say that the political function is essentially an adjustment function. In human society there is an ever-present need for some systematic method of making adjustments in human relationships, and the more highly developed the society the greater the need. One might conceive of a community of human beings in which all live in amicable accord, with full knowledge of how to live a perfect social life, and a willingness to live it. We would then have what Herbert Spencer called "a state of perfect equilibrium," and there would be no adjustment problems to attend to. But it is hardly necessary to say that human societies known in history have never reached such a state of perfection, and there seems to be little prospect of their doing so in the near future.

### **The inclusive nature of political functions**

In a fairly simple society, problems of this nature may be so unimportant that there would be no need for special institutional arrangements to meet them. This is said to be true of certain Eskimo tribes, but it is not true of groups that have developed complicated social structures, or those that have made much progress in the arts of civilization. With them

there are constantly recurring problems arising from maladjustments that come from conflicting interests of individuals and groups within the community, and from conflict with the interests of other communities. Perhaps it is because problems of this nature are constantly recurring that institutions evolve which take over the task of settling them in some systematic and orderly way. At any rate such institutions do arise. When the problems are such as affect the entire community, actually or potentially, the institutions that take them over are said to be dealing with matters of common interest, or general welfare. These are the ones that have come to be known as political institutions. Thus, there are institutions for common defense against hostile attacks from without, others to keep the peace and maintain general order within the community, others to formulate rules of conduct for the group as a whole; still others, or perhaps the same ones, to see that they are enforced, and so on. Generally speaking, they are those social institutions that are primarily concerned with the maintenance of order and the general welfare of a community through the regulation and control of the external relations of its members.

The political function is thus not only negative in character but positive as well. It involves not only the imposition of restraints to keep the peace, but positive efforts looking toward the general good of the community. It may affect any aspect of individual or social life—whether it be economic, religious, or domestic in character—whenever such activities develop problems of general concern. The problem which faces the farmer of disposing of wheat at a fair price is economic in nature; it becomes political also when the rest of the community becomes seriously affected. Again, the steel manufacturer's problem of selling his product at a fair profit is economic; but it is also political if the maintenance of steel plants is threatened and the community as a whole thus affected. In either case political institutions would be expected to intervene, not to aid the farmer or steel manufacturer primarily, but to see to it that the general welfare did not suffer from an economic maladjustment. Just when such problems become matters of general concern is necessarily a matter of



opinion. Perhaps the best we can do is to remember that the political institutions themselves decide the question, and that, in common with all other institutions, they do sometimes get into fields that are only indirectly related to their primary functions.

### THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The actual beginnings of political institutions will probably never be known. All we do know is that they were present in well-developed forms at the dawn of history and have persisted up to the present. In the absence of actual knowledge of political origins various beliefs about the matter have prevailed from time to time—beliefs which became convictions and had so potent an influence in shaping political institutions that they cannot be ignored. Some of these will be described.

#### The belief in divine origins

First may be mentioned the theory of divine origins. During certain periods from ancient times until well into the modern age the belief was common that political institutions were of divine origin. The prevailing idea during the Middle Ages was that they were the express creations of God. This theory fitted into the picture of special creation as related in the Biblical account of the creation of man. It was first advanced by secular princes in opposition to papal claims of supremacy in temporal matters. According to their conception of the divine plan, two powers were set up on earth, one spiritual, the other temporal. The Church ruled in the realm of the spiritual; the princes ruled in the temporal world. Each had a separate existence and was expressly created by divine fiat. Later on, the princes found the theory extremely useful in resisting the claims of their subjects to a share in political authority. Here the theory of divine origin was supplemented by the theory of divine right to rule. Thus not only was political authority divinely created, but the princes themselves were divinely ordained to exercise it; hence revolt was regarded as a sin against God. The theory was of tremendous importance for centuries not only in assisting in the development of the modern state but in maintaining the autocratic rulers of the day.

### The compact theory

When opposition to the divine right of kings appeared in the eighteenth century, a counter theory was presented as an instrument to break down the earlier political order. This is known as the compact theory. The compact theory attributed the origin of political society to a formal agreement among men. Political institutions, it was asserted, were purely artificial mechanisms created by man himself to serve his own ends, and entirely devoid of the sacrosanct character claimed for them by the divine-right theorists. This theory of the contractual origin of the state was developed in various ways, but it was always predicated on the assumption that there existed, before political control appeared, an original state of nature, in which all men possessed complete freedom to do as they pleased and to defend their rights and interests as best they could against the rest of mankind. Sometimes the state of nature was pictured as a condition of continuous, potential, or actual warfare; sometimes as one of reasonable contentment. But it had obvious inconveniences, to say the least, which any rational man could see; and man, being a rational animal, invented political society as an improvement. The procedure was simple. Each gave up his natural right to do as he pleased and agreed with all others to set up a political authority which all promised to obey, in return for which they received protection and security. This, according to the theory, was the original compact creating political society. To it was usually added another in which men covenanted with some particular person or persons to exercise the political authority created by the first contract. This was known as the governmental compact.

A fairy story? Perhaps. None the less, it was for some time generally believed to be the true account of political origins. It is the dogma upon which all popular governments of modern times have been erected. If political power came originally from the people, government by consent of the governed seemed the logical conclusion. But other implications were equally possible, for much depended on the nature of the

compact the people were supposed to have entered into. For instance, Thomas Hobbes, writing in England during the turbulent days of the Puritan revolution of the seventeenth century, insisted in a notable work, *The Great Leviathan*, that the people by divesting themselves of their original rights and by establishing political authority which they promised to obey, were perpetually bound to obedience, and were morally bound not to resort to revolution. He thus sought to persuade the discontented to accept the blessings of law and order as preferable to revolution and anarchy. Later in the same century the philosopher John Locke, in his *Two Treatises of Government*, invoked the compact theory to justify revolution. As he interpreted it, political power was established for the limited purposes of protecting the lives and property of the people, and all other rights possessed by man in the state of nature were left undisturbed. When, therefore, government exceeded the limited purposes for which it had been created, the compact was broken and the people were free to enter into new arrangements.

Locke's interpretation of the compact theory had a deep influence upon his time and the revolutionary period that followed in the eighteenth century. What he did was to rationalize the right of revolution. He is known as the philosopher of the "bloodless" Revolution of 1688 in England, which resulted in the establishment of parliamentary supremacy, and settled forever, so far as England was concerned, the pretensions of divine right and absolutism. His doctrine was likewise generally accepted in America, where it became the theoretical basis for the revolt against England in 1775, and where it found clear expression in its essentials in the Declaration of Independence, and contributed to the idea of limited government which became imbedded in our constitutional system. It likewise influenced the revolutionary philosophy of revolt which became current preceding the outbreak of the great French Revolution of 1789, as indicated earlier in this work.

That influence was most potent upon the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, who presented still another conception of the social compact in a celebrated work, *The Social Con-*



*tract*. He agreed with Hobbes that in entering into the covenant to establish political society man gave up all his natural rights, and obtained in return security in a political society; but the exchange of natural rights for political security was made only on condition that all should share in the political power thus established. His conclusion was that all governments in which the people do not participate are illegitimate—popular sovereignty is the only justifiable basis for any political society. Along with Hobbes and Locke, Rousseau is given a place among the trilogy of writers who are, by common consent, recognized as the greatest exponents of the compact theory. The writings of these three men are the classics of the political literature of this type.

### **The force theory**

A third explanation of the origin of political institutions is called the force theory. The force theory repudiates both the idea of divine right and that of the social compact, and insists that force, and force alone, explains the way in which governments arose. No extended explanation of the meaning of this theory is necessary. Among the writers who have held this view was Bodin, a great French jurist of the sixteenth century, who did much to clarify the meaning and nature of the modern state. His conception was that there existed in primitive society heads of households who ruled the family members in a patriarchal hegemony. Some powerful head then subjected weaker household heads to his control and thus built up political power. Bodin's contribution to our knowledge of the method by which the French state had developed, and what we have learned of the beginnings of some other of the modern states would lend some credence to the idea that political origins can thus be explained.

### **Evolution**

Modern studies of social institutions, however, have led to a very general rejection of all these theories as being only in part true, if true at all. The current opinion seems to be that all social institutions result from slow processes of change from

simple social structures that were, in earlier times, mixtures of religious, economic, and other elements. This conception fits into the widely accepted view of evolution in the animal world and the facts of institutional development as revealed in history. It accepts the idea that the factors mentioned in the foregoing theories may have had a part in the process. However, it seems very unlikely that man played any conscious part in the origins of political institutions, although he has, in the process of their development, deliberately reshaped them at times in order to make them serve his purposes more effectively.

### WHAT IS A STATE?

The complex civilization in which we live today includes many highly-developed agencies that serve political purposes. There are institutions of legislation, which formulate general rules for the government of society; institutions of administration that get the rules enforced; the courts, which settle disputes and administer justice in general; political parties; and a host of others that might be mentioned. Any analysis of these institutions would present a bewildering task were it not for the fact that practically all of them are included in what are known as governmental agencies; and most of these are part of, or directly related to, one great, basic political association called the state. The easiest approach, therefore, to a study of political institutions is through an examination of the state, for only after one has a clear conception of its nature can the others be properly understood.

Sufficient has been said in preceding chapters to make it clear that definitions are always relative to the point of view of the person attempting them. This is certainly true of the state, which has such a variety of aspects that many definitions may be, and have been, formulated, each with a certain validity. With this precautionary statement, we may accept Professor Garner's definition as being most satisfactory for our present purposes. It is as follows: "A state . . . is a community of persons more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite territory, independent, or nearly so, of external control, and possessing organized government to which the great body

of inhabitants render habitual obedience."<sup>1</sup> This statement describes with sufficient accuracy the nature of the sixty-odd political communities into which the modern world is divided. It includes the following elements: people, territory, government, permanence, independence, and sovereignty.

### Physical attributes of the state

Of the first two physical elements of the state little need be said. It is obvious that people must be included, and the number is not a matter of importance. In the ancient world we encountered city-states and extensive empires; today states vary in population from a few thousand, as in the little state of Monaco, to world-wide empires of many millions. The question whether small, homogeneous states are more desirable than larger ones, or even a world state, involves interesting speculations into which we need not enter here. As to territory, the better view seems to conform to Garner's definition which insists on some fixed abode for the state, although nomadic tribes that are independent and have effective government are considered by some writers as states.

The third important element in the state is government. By government is meant the organized machinery through which the state expresses its authoritative judgments and gets them enforced. It is not different in kind from similar machinery found in other social institutions. In common with them, the state must possess some organization or it could not survive. It is just as essential to the state as is the physical body to the individual. There is thus a distinction between the state and its government which should always be kept clear, although the two are often confused. The distinction is important because it would be very misleading to attribute characteristics of the state to the government of the state, and in some instances it would be fatal to an understanding of the nature of either. The relation between the state and the government can best be illustrated, perhaps, by reference to a business corporation. The corporation is the entire association of stock-

<sup>1</sup>J. W. Garner, *Political Science and Government* (American Book Company, 1928), p. 52.



holders, officers, agents, *et al.*, organized for certain business purposes. We use the term "corporation" to apply to the entire aggregate, which has an identity of its own as a group, just as we use the term "state" to apply to the political aggregate. The organization of the corporation may consist of a board of directors, a president, and other officers of the group, just as does the government in the state. But just as it would be improper to speak of the board of directors, or the president, as being the corporation, so is it improper to refer to the government as the state. It is merely the physical agency through which the state gets its work done.

Consideration of another aspect of the state—that of permanence—will also help to show more clearly the difference between state and government. It is true that the state could not exist long without some form of government; but the government may change, it may even be changed completely, without disturbing the state. The Revolution in France at the close of the eighteenth century transformed the French government completely from a monarchy to a long succession of other types, but the state of France was not destroyed. It remained, and remains today, under the French Republic. Even so drastic a revolution as that in Russia in 1917 changed merely the governmental machine of the Russian state. The state therefore is a permanent thing, while governments are constantly changing. Permanence, however, does not mean perpetuity. A state may be destroyed by conquest, by absorption into another state, by voluntary annexation to another state, and in various other ways.

### State independence

Independence is another requisite element of the state. A group of persons living in a given territory with a government of their own may still fall short of being a state if they do not possess independence from external control. Villages, counties, cities, and other local governmental areas, therefore, are not states; for local autonomy does not constitute independence. Actually such local units may enjoy the greatest measure of control over their own affairs, but if there exists any outside

authority that can interfere legally—can legally put an end to their local self-government—then they cannot be said to have that quality of independence all states must have. On the other hand, some communities that are formally recognized as states do not possess complete freedom from external political control. In the course of imperialist expansion the Western states have often infringed upon the sovereign rights of weaker countries. For example, in the little republic of Panama the United States exercises sovereign rights, including the right to build fortifications, over the Canal Zone—a strip of territory ten miles wide extending through the heart of the republic. In instances such as this, the degree of external control is not considered sufficiently great to destroy the status of statehood.

From what has been said it should be clear that such units in our government as Ohio, Kentucky, etc., are not to be considered as states in the strict sense, although they are called such. The powers that these units exercise are not determined by them but by the Constitution of the United States. The reasons why they are called states are largely historical. Before the adoption of the Constitution, in 1789, they were independent states in the real sense, and even after they were merged into the federal union created by the Constitution they continued to use the term even though they had lost the attributes of statehood. Similar reasons explain why in the German Empire, before the World War, local units such as Bavaria and Saxony were called states.

### **State sovereignty**

We now come to the last and most vital characteristic of the state—sovereignty. Sovereignty is not merely power which the state exerts over its members. All human associations exert power over their members, as long as they are members. The head of a family exerts authority within the family; an economic institution does likewise over its members. By sovereignty of the state we refer to the supreme, coercive authority which is attributed to the state alone, and which is its real essence. It differs from other forms of authority, as found in other institutions, in several important respects. In the first

place, sovereignty implies supremacy in that no human authority is recognized above it, either from within or from outside the territory of the state. In other words, it implies practical independence from external authority; it also implies that there is no equal or competing authority within the state. Sovereignty is also said to be unlimited in the scope of its authority over individuals and groups within the state; indivisible, for, being ultimate and supreme, its very nature does not permit of division; inalienable, for to part with it would be to lose it altogether; and territorially exclusive, in that it reaches all persons and things within the area of the state. It is even thought by some to be infallible. From such terms as these does one get an idea of the nature of this most essential feature of the modern state. Indeed, as one reads the literature about sovereignty, one might well experience a sense of dizziness trying to comprehend its impressive omnipotence.

#### **Legal and political sovereignty distinguished**

One need not be too overawed, however, if one will recall that the term "sovereignty" was an invention of the lawyers, and was intended to describe something quite definite. Looking at the state as a political institution we have seen that it has its own peculiar duties or functions. These include the duty of determining formal rules of conduct that shall apply generally throughout the region of the state's jurisdiction. They are called laws and represent the expressed will of the community. Manifestly there must be, somewhere within the state, a definite human agency, some person or group of persons with recognized authority to say the final word as to what the law shall be. This agency may be a king, a parliament, a constitutional convention, or any other definite group or groups; but its authority to act for the community must be recognized as final. Every political state has some such authoritative source of law. It is called the legal sovereign, and the power it possesses is called legal sovereignty. In the oriental despotisms of the ancient Near East and in the absolute monarchies of later periods legal sovereignty resided in the king or emperor himself. In modern governments the task of trying to locate



the legal sovereign in any particular state is sometimes difficult, but it can be done. In England, for instance, it is clearly the Parliament; in the United States, it is the aggregate of legislatures or constitutional conventions which, together with Congress, can amend the Constitution.

The term "sovereignty," however, is not used exclusively in the legal sense. It is often used to indicate the basic political controls that lie back of the legal sovereign and influence its action. For instance, it has been said that Parliament in England is the legal sovereign because it has ultimate authority to make and change the law at will. But Parliament, or more strictly speaking the House of Commons,<sup>1</sup> is elected by popular vote, and the voters thus have control over their sovereign, Parliament. In the United States the organs of government that share in the power to amend the Constitution exercise legal sovereignty, but they in turn are elective and are thus amenable to the voters. In either case, therefore, it may be said that the voters can determine what the fundamental law shall be by the control which they have over the political organs that make it. It is this power that is called political sovereignty as distinguished from legal sovereignty. It is also called popular sovereignty, or the sovereignty of the "people." It would be possible of course to combine the two. For instance, if the voters actually made the fundamental law, as they do in some of our local "states," they would be exercising legal sovereignty.

Legal sovereignty and political sovereignty are thus not two conflicting ideas. They refer to two distinctly different kinds of things, and both ideas are entirely legitimate. But whenever in a state democratically organized the people can control their legal sovereign, much of its omnipotence disappears. It is apparent that it is ultimate and supreme only in terms of law. In the broader political sense it is the people, and particularly the voters, that possess the ultimate supremacy.

Finally, it should be remembered that the people themselves are constantly subjected to thousands of pressures that determine their action and their ideas. These are geographical,

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<sup>1</sup>The English Parliament is composed of two houses, but the upper, the House of Lords, has been shorn of much of its power over legislation.

biological, or social in nature. They are constantly conditioning the conduct of political as well as all other social institutions. But they are so changeable, so intermixed, and so elusive that we are soon lost in a maze when we try to trace the original sources of control in political life. And after all is said, it remains true that these forces, however important they may be, have no legal recognition. If they have influence in determining what the law shall be, that influence must always be exerted through the recognized legal channels—that is, through the legal sovereign.

### **Sovereignty and international relations**

One important aspect of sovereignty, which will receive more detailed treatment in a later chapter, should receive passing mention here—that is the effect which the conception of sovereignty has upon the relation of states to each other. It is significant to notice that the independent power of the state inherent in sovereignty, which is a source of orderly social existence in the civil community, becomes a source of disorder in the community of states in the world at large. How can this be?

As already explained, under the conception of sovereignty all political states are independent. It follows that in the field of international politics all states are theoretically equal; and if all are equal in rights there can be no recognition of a superstate or supernational authority. Limitations upon the conduct of states in relation to one another must therefore have their source in prohibitions which states impose upon themselves in agreement with one another, or in a kind of nebulous thing which has been termed the "moral conscience of mankind." But experience has taught that neither international law nor moral force is efficacious to a satisfactory degree, particularly in emergencies, because there is at present no recognized authority which can bring a state or states into court and enforce a judgment. The result is a condition of affairs in the world that has been aptly described as an "international anarchy," a situation which, in principle, is as dangerous to the tranquillity and peace of the world community as would be the

absence of a recognized authority in the civil community. Fundamentally, the present League of Nations and the World Court represent a groping of society toward the elimination of this dangerous situation.

### **The state and the nation**

Such are the characteristic elements differentiating the state from other institutions. As a final point in clarifying our definition, it may be well to remove a common confusion arising from a failure to distinguish the state from the nation.<sup>1</sup> Strictly speaking, the terms "state" and "nation" have quite different meanings. The former is a political concept and refers to the sort of independent, politically organized group that has been described. The latter was originally an ethnic, or racial, concept used to denote a group bound together by ties of kinship; but it has come to be applied to any group that has developed conscious sentiments of unity, or a group spirit that distinguishes its members from others. It need not have, and sometimes does not have, political organization of any sort. But the national spirit, when it exists, comes normally to demand a separate political life of its own. States built up on this foundation of a unity of spirit and culture are known as national states, and most of the great states of our day can, at least roughly, be classed as such.

It is this fact that explains why, in our times, the terms "state" and "nation" have come so generally to be used interchangeably. Thus common usage frequently leads us to use the word "nation," when it is the politically organized group—the state—that is referred to. We also commonly speak of the spirit of nationalism as meaning identically the same thing as the spirit of patriotism, which is the term more accurately used to indicate our attachment to the political unit to which we belong. Such usage is so common, particularly in England and America, that some authorities have come to accept it as proper. In our own country, for example, the political state—the United States of America—is called the nation, and, to add to the confusion which results, one rarely refers to the

<sup>1</sup>For a more detailed discussion, see pp. 656 ff.



state except in connection with such local units as New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, which are not, properly speaking, states at all.

### **The state contrasted with other institutions**

From what has been said of the character of the state, certain major features which differentiate the state from other institutions should be clear. In the first place, the state differs conspicuously from all other institutions in that its membership is compulsory—one is born into the state, while membership in other institutions is voluntary. It follows that while one may belong to as many “voluntary” institutions as he cares to or as will admit him, he may hold membership in only one state at one time. The jurisdiction of a state is also distinctive, in that it is territorially exclusive; that is, it reaches only such persons as reside in a given area. The jurisdiction of other institutions is not so limited. The jurisdiction of a church, for example, may be world-wide; a bank may extend its authority to several countries. Again, the state possesses the peculiar function of maintaining order in society and of serving common interests, while other institutions serve each a particular rather than a general interest of society. Finally, the state, of all institutions, is the only one possessing that supreme authority called sovereignty, this being regarded as the chief earmark of the state—its most distinctive feature.

It will be seen that it is chiefly this claim to sovereignty which the state makes that establishes its relations to other institutions. Its unquestioned supremacy makes it paramount in the political group itself, for, with the exception of certain international institutions that are developing in our day, all political institutions other than the state are merely parts of it and are clearly subordinate to it. They are governmental institutions that do the work of the state. In large measure, nonpolitical institutions are also subject to the state. The state, it is true, cannot perform the functions of other institutions. It has its own; but the nature of its functions gives it a certain position of preëminence over the others, for the welfare of the community may demand the regulation and restraint of

institutions, just as much as of individuals. They all come within the supreme regulatory authority of the state. They have lives of their own to live, but their lives as institutions are no more outside the competency of the state than are the lives of individuals. If, then, we look at society from this point of view, it takes on certain aspects of unity, coherence, oneness, at least within the politically organized group we call the state; and the thing which gives it unity is said to be the ultimate authority the state possesses. Such has come to be the generally accepted view of the nature of the state and its relation to individuals and other social institutions. It is sometimes referred to as the monistic theory of the state.

Recent writers have attacked this view as unsound and completely out of harmony with reality. In their examination of society the thing that impresses them most is diversity rather than unity. They see a great multiplicity of social groups, each with its own peculiar function, often having origins and an existence quite independent of state authority, and demanding and getting allegiance from its members much as does the state. To these writers, therefore, society appears as a multiple thing without the unity of a coördinating authority—such as the state claims to be, but has never been able to establish in fact. State sovereignty, they say, is a pure fiction which ought to be forgotten, and the state should be regarded as only one of many groups, in the entire galaxy of which it should accept a position of equality rather than one of superiority. Their general viewpoint has come to be known as the pluralistic theory of the state. It has many intriguing aspects, but the bulk of opinion seems to be that the pluralists have failed to make out a convincing case against the theory of state sovereignty, which remains the orthodox theory. However, their realistic way of looking at society has value. It has indicated clearly the need of a thorough re-examination of the organization of our governmental machinery if it is to be kept in line with the rapidly changing social and economic structure of our day.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The theory of pluralism is elaborately treated in the works of Figgis, Laski, Duguit, and others. See especially Harold Laski, *The Modern Problem of Sovereignty*.

## THE CHARACTER AND FUNCTION OF LAW IN THE STATE

It was stated earlier in this discussion that one of the functions of political institutions is to maintain order in the community. This function they perform by the making and enforcing of laws. Laws, in the political sense, are general rules of conduct which the state accepts and enforces. When the state has accepted them as its own they are said to express the will of the state. Within the state the courts are the political agencies that apply the law and interpret its meaning; hence law is sometimes said to be rules of conduct that the courts will enforce. The meaning is the same. A system of law is necessary in any society. It is true that our behavior patterns in society are conditioned by customs deeply rooted in the culture of the community. Generally speaking, therefore, our conduct fits into these customs, and we observe them as a matter of course. But they are not always observed; they are not always definite; and they are constantly and imperceptibly changing. For these reasons, if for no other, law becomes a necessity. It gives precision to the rules of conduct, makes them universally applicable, and puts the power of the state back of them to insure their observance.<sup>1</sup>

### Common law

There are two general kinds of law—the customary or common law, and written law. The customary law consists of those rules or customs of the community, which the courts accept and apply. It is not formally declared at any given time and it is not written, but it is none the less definite. The body of the common law has developed through centuries of growth and out of decisions of the judges in applying the customs of the community. It is now a huge system of law in itself, and has come to be a very rigid system with a procedure of its own. It does change, however, for the courts, from one generation to another, are called upon to apply its well-settled principles to new conditions; and new meanings or interpreta-

<sup>1</sup>See R. G. Gettell, *Political Science* (Ginn and Company, 1933), Chap. 11.



tions thus creep into it. In one sense, this type of law is never made by the state; it exists in custom, and the court merely recognizes it and gives it a sanction—that is, requires its observance. But in another sense it is judge-made law, for the recognition of the custom by the court is the thing that gives it the stamp of authority, and transforms it into law. This is precisely the difference between an ordinary custom which most of us normally observe, and common law which the state compels us to observe. One may violate a custom without incurring more than social disapproval, but to violate a custom which has been declared common law is to risk heavy penalties imposed by the state.

### **Statute law**

In addition to the common law there is the great mass of written law, formally declared by the proper legislative and constitutional organs of the state. It is, in fact, this type which we usually have in mind when we speak of law as being the expressed will of the state. In substance it may be nothing more than a formal statement of the principles of the common law; it may be a modification of the common law; or it may contain entirely new principles and programs unknown to the common law. In any event, it always supersedes the common law when the two conflict. In our legal system we thus have the two systems of law existing side by side. The common law prevails until it is modified or abolished by written law.

### **Constitutional law**

In England written law always takes the form of statutes enacted by Parliament, regardless of the nature of the subject matter with which it deals. In most other countries with constitutional governments a distinction is made between what is known as fundamental, or constitutional, law and ordinary statute law. The former is embodied in separate written documents called constitutions, containing the major principles on which the political structure is founded, and which relate to the structure and powers of the different organs of government. It is in the constitutional law that one finds the statement of the

basic conditions on which political society functions, what rights the individual can claim, what the organs of government shall be, and what they can do. It is the supreme law of the land—an expression of the will of the legal sovereign. Statute law, on the other hand, comprises the ordinary statutes enacted by the legislative bodies established and controlled by the constitutional law. Thus, for example, the Constitution of the United States created our Congress and vested it with powers to regulate interstate commerce. By virtue of this authority, Congress then enacts laws regulating railroads and other interstate carriers, as well as business of an interstate character.

Western civilization has produced two great systems of law that have survived. The first is the system of Roman law. As has been pointed out in preceding chapters, this represents the distinctive contribution which Rome made to progress in the Western world. Beginning with primitive rules of custom and religious rites, Rome developed a complete system of legal rules based on universal principles and practices, thoroughly systematized and reduced to writing in the great *Justinian Code* of the Eastern Empire. Revived after the days of feudalism, this code came to be the basis of the modern law of Continental European states. The other great system of law is known as the English common-law system, which gradually evolved in England after the time of the Norman Conquest (1066) and is now used in practically all the English-speaking portions of the Western world. It is a part of our own heritage.

### FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

One other question should be raised concerning the state, before bringing this survey to a conclusion. Can states be classified and, if so, how? Mention has been made of the fact that most political institutions form parts of the larger entity we have been describing as the state, and that the only outward form which the state takes is expressed in its governmental machinery. When, therefore, we speak of the forms of political institutions we refer to the forms of government,

and when we classify states on the basis of their forms, what we are really doing is classifying governments. Only in this sense, then, can it be accurately said that states may be classified. As to governments, they may be classified from many points of view, but the oldest, and one of the most valuable classifications, is that which is based on a consideration of the number of persons in whom governmental power is vested. From this point of view governments are monarchies, aristocracies, or democracies.

Monarchy is government in which all power is centralized in the hands of one person, usually called a king, emperor, or dictator. If this ruler exercises his power arbitrarily and without reference to general laws the government is called an absolute monarchy, a despotism, or a tyranny; if, however, he governs in accordance with general laws, it is said to be a constitutional or limited monarchy. Monarchy as a type of government is conceded to have great strength, particularly in times of emergency, for it eliminates the dangers of divided counsel, and hence admits of more decisive action.

When power is vested in a few members of the community the government is said to be aristocratic. The basis of selection of the few that wield the power of the state may be wealth, heredity, or ability. Aristocracies of ability have the peculiar merit of insuring a greater amount of wisdom in the conduct of affairs of state than any other form, but the difficulty of agreeing upon any standards by which to determine ability seems almost insuperable. Moreover, even the best aristocracies inevitably tend to become corrupt as the ruling few exercise their power to enhance their own group interests at the expense of the masses. An aristocracy that takes this perverted form is usually called an oligarchy.

When political power is widely distributed among the masses the government is said to be democratic. It does not mean that a majority of the people must share in political power, for this would be a requirement which no government could meet. Although the line of demarcation between aristocracies and democracies is not in all cases clearly drawn, the difference between them is usually discernible. When popular or demo-



cratic government first developed it was of the more conservative sort, with relatively few of the masses actually having power, and the majority exercising theirs only through representatives; the term "republican" was then used to distinguish this form of government from the monarchical and aristocratic. Later on popular governments tended to extend the electorate, and an increasing number of people were permitted to share in the power of the state; and as this practice became established, the term "democratic" came gradually to displace the older term "republican." However, both are still used at times to indicate any government in which the bulk of the people possess political power. The more conservative type of democracy, in which the power of the people is exercised through representatives, is called representative democracy, and the more extreme type, in which the people exercise their powers directly without a representative as an intermediary, is called pure, or direct democracy. The latter is found in Switzerland, in some parts of the United States, and in some other countries; but most democracies of the past, as well as the present, have been and are of the representative type.

Several advantages are attributed to democratic government. First, it tends to greater stability in government, because the masses are less likely to be dissatisfied with the results of their own handiwork. Second, it reflects more accurately than any other form the common welfare. Third, the mass opinion, at least in countries with a fairly high level of intelligence and enlightenment, will be a wiser opinion than that of one man or a few men. Lastly, it stimulates an interest in public affairs, and acts as an educative influence in the development of better citizenship.

Although it is not accurate to say that in the development of political institutions society presents an evolutionary process under which peoples pass through each of these stages in succession from autocracy, in which one person combines all political power in his own person, to democracy, in which political power becomes the possession of all; yet history does justify the conclusion that, as knowledge becomes more widely disseminated and new groups become political-minded, pressure

is brought to bear upon political institutions to broaden downward, so that step by step an increasing number of the population of the state are admitted to political rights founded on law. This fact will become apparent when we turn to the historical development of political institutions.

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## POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS BEFORE MODERN TIMES

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**H**OW FAR BACK can we trace the state? As already shown, we cannot trace it to its origins; all the political scientist can do is to speculate and theorize on that subject, for political institutions had long been in existence when history began. In our study of the ancient civilizations we found them already well developed. We were impressed by the intense political activity of the Greeks and found abundant evidence in the writings of Plato and Aristotle of the preoccupation of Greek thinkers with the political life of their time. Their influence upon political thought since their day has been highly important. As for the Romans, their achievements in government and law have excited the admiration and wonder of all who have seriously studied their institutions. As we pass on to a more detailed study of the political life of the Middle Ages we at once become aware of the great significance of the Roman heritage in later civilizations. No study of medieval institutions can ignore that heritage, for the Middle Ages do not represent a complete break with the preceding past, or a mere thousand-year void of darkness and stagnation lying between the ancient and modern eras. This period is to be viewed rather as just one segment of a continuous stream of history; hence its institutions cannot be studied in complete isolation. They grew *out of* preceding institutions, and grew *into* succeed-



ing ones. We must, therefore, take a glance at their Roman progenitors in order to get our bearings in the Middle Ages.

### **Our political heritage from Rome**

It will be recalled that from the seventh century B. C. to the fifth century A. D., Rome ran the whole gamut of political development, from insignificant village to world empire; from sturdy democracy to absolute monarchy and military despotism; from adolescent rigor to senescent decay. But through it all there runs an aptitude—or genius, as some call it—for government and administration that influences the political life of all occidental countries today. Most of our modern political vocabulary comes, directly or indirectly, from Rome. Such terms as emperor, president, senate, congress, parliament, council, consul, prefect, colony, magistrate, veto, municipality, censor, committee, province—these and many others bear witness to our debt to Rome; and though the institutions which they represent do not always bear a very close resemblance to the originals, in most cases the connection may be clearly traced. For example, the names of administrative subdivisions—communes, cantons, and provinces—indicate the Imperial influence; the prefect, presiding over the department in France or the province in Belgium and Italy, may be considered as a direct descendant of the Roman official of the same name.

In the field of municipal administration and of law, almost the entire Western world, as well as some of the Orient, has drawn upon Roman practice and experience. The very concept of a municipality, as well as the name, originated in Rome. In pre-Roman days, a city was merely the aggregate of its citizens, and had no legal existence apart from them, but Rome developed the ideal of the city as a corporation, or legal person, apart from its inhabitants. The city as we know it today, possessing a charter, the attribute of permanence, the right to sue and to be sued, to own property, and to operate public utilities, is based on the Roman concept of a municipality. But in the field of politics, we owe most of all to Rome as the lawgiver of the world. The entire Western world, with the exception of the United States, England, and most of the Brit-

ish colonies and dominions, bases its legal system primarily upon Roman law. Even in the United States, Louisiana, and, in the British Empire, Scotland, Quebec, the Union of South Africa, and Ceylon follow the Civil Law of Rome rather than the Common Law of England.

It was from Rome, it will be recalled, that medieval and early modern rulers received the idea of the divinity of kings, as a heritage from the deification of the Roman emperors. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this idea was so elaborated as to invest the king with a divine right to rule. The theory of divine right is much older than the Roman tradition, to be sure, for divinity was ascribed to the kings and emperors of ancient Egypt and the Orient; but so far as medieval Europe is concerned, the idea came by way of Rome. Although the doctrine is no longer seriously held, its modern counterpart is to be found in the immunity of the state from legal action (in England and the United States). The sovereign was divine and could do no wrong, therefore could not be sued or prosecuted. When the king as a person lost his omnipotence, sovereignty was transferred to the state, but its attributes remained substantially the same. Thus the state, or sovereign, in our legal fiction, can do no wrong, and hence cannot be the defendant in a legal action without its own consent.

Still another inheritance from Rome was the Roman imperial idea of a world state. In the course of imperial expansion, Roman nationalism was lost in the conception of a political unity of the known world under the hegemony of Rome. That ideal did not disappear with the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, but continued to be a dynamic factor in European history. During the Middle Ages the ideal was in complete harmony with the universal character of the Christian Church. It set up a political goal which ambitious rulers tried to reach for centuries to come. The empire of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire were, as we shall see presently, related attempts to reconstruct a Roman Empire on even broader geographic foundations than the original. Its influence can be seen also in the political aims and achievements of the medieval Church itself. Nor did the idea lose its force with the passing

of the Middle Ages; it dazzled the mind and stimulated the ambitions of Charles V of Spain in the sixteenth century, and as late as the nineteenth century Napoleon Bonaparte appears to have been animated by the desire to bring all of the old Roman dominions under his sway. Not until the modern idea of constructing the state upon a national basis had become so firmly rooted in European politics as to defy the efforts of the most ambitious states was the Roman ideal of political unity abandoned.

Finally, Rome handed down to Europe a powerful institution, the Roman Catholic Church, which gave to medieval political life some of its most distinctive characteristics. As indicated in an earlier chapter, the Church overshadowed all other institutions in the Middle Ages; it was itself a political as well as a religious institution, and it made a deep impression on the political characteristics of the age. Politically the Middle Ages contrast sharply with the Roman period. Political institutions and political interests were dominant in Roman civilization. In the Middle Ages they occupied a subordinate position; and so far as political thought is concerned, it was almost nonexistent aside from the political theories that emerged in the great struggle between Church and State over the question of supremacy. The low estate to which political activity and thought sank was the result of the general political disintegration following the collapse of the Roman Empire and of the preëminent position which that disintegration gave to the Church. The Church offered great opportunities for ambition and ability; like a magnet it drew into its service a class of men whose talents and social position might well have drawn them into political paths under other circumstances. In fact, the Church itself offered abundant opportunities for the display of political talents.

This summary of Europe's heritage from Rome will suffice to show how many political influences carried over from the Roman to the medieval age. Although the influences here described were not always apparent in the Middle Ages, they were never completely lost. Sometimes they lay dormant, submerged in ignorance or barbarian customs, or preserved



only in unread volumes in secluded monasteries, but ready, nevertheless, for revival when, at the time of the Renaissance, the emphasis on secular interests in general and the political activity of princes in particular restored law and government to a position of high importance.

### **Political disintegration after the fall of Rome**

In the East, it will be remembered, the Byzantine Empire, with its center at Constantinople, withstood the impact of the Germanic invasions. Political order was maintained in the East, while in the West the extinction of the Roman line of emperors in 476 A. D. was followed by political disintegration. In that year, Romulus Augustulus renounced his claim to the imperial throne, and there was no other emperor in the West until Charlemagne, three hundred and twenty-four years later. During that long interval, western Europe presents a scene of almost complete political disorder. The petty kings among the conquering tribesmen were in perpetual strife, and the frontiers of their kingdoms advanced and receded as the fortunes of war tipped the scale of their power up or down.

Out of the chaos which we have just described, there finally emerged a number of independent kingdoms and territories of sufficient stability to place their names at least temporarily on the political map. Such were the Kingdom of Odoacer in Italy; the Kingdom of the West Goths, covering most of the Iberian Peninsula; the Kingdom of the Franks, extending from the Loire to the Rhine. In theory, these kingdoms and territories acknowledged the suzerainty of the emperor in Constantinople, but this was little more than a legal fiction. For all practical purposes, they were independent, except for a brief period in the sixth century when Justinian was able to effect a temporary reunion of the East and the West. The political organization of these kingdoms and principalities need not detain us, since, for the most part, they proved to be ephemeral. Europe was still in a state of political flux. One of these kingdoms, however—that of the Franks—was destined to grow into a great empire including most of western Europe, and to play a notable part in the development of medieval civilization.

### An approach to medieval political institutions

Institutions should be studied and judged in their own cultural setting. To appreciate the political institutions of the Middle Ages, so strikingly different from those of our own time, we need to bear in mind the heritage from Rome, but we need also to fit the descriptions that are to follow into the setting of medieval civilization. The sparsity of population, the slender facilities for communication, the isolation of communities, the comparative simplicity of life, the general illiteracy, the marked influence of customs and tradition, the emphasis on authority, the element of unity imparted to the medieval world through the universalism implicit in the ideals and administration of a dominant universal Church bent on the glorification of the life after death and deprecating the evils of earthly existence—all of these features in the mosaic of medieval life form the background against which medieval political institutions are to be understood and judged.<sup>1</sup>

In modern times the nation-state prevails generally throughout the Western world as the accepted type of political organization, but a survey of the political life of the Middle Ages discloses no such uniformity. As we view the entire period, we can discern successive political currents or trends dominating political thought and practice, and resulting in several distinctive types of political organization. First, one sees the perennial attempt to revive, in fact as well as in theory, the universal state, or a new Roman Empire, in which the major emphasis was upon the centralization of political authority. According to this ideal, all Europe would again recognize one master. But this grandiose project was never fully realized, and it finally gave way to a counter movement, which represented a trend toward political localism or *particularism*, in which the emphasis was upon the authority or independence of the local political rulers, rather than upon political centralization. This change was marked by the emergence of two types of political institutions: (a) a peculiar political system known as feudalism, and (b) the city-state. Ultimately we

<sup>1</sup>See particularly pp. 289-291.

find still another trend, which caused the localism of the feudal and city-state organizations to give way to the conception of national organization. It was this change which heralded the coming of the nation-states and the approach of the modern age. We shall examine each of these trends and the resulting political institutions.

### ATTEMPTS AT POLITICAL UNITY: MEDIEVAL EMPIRES

The trend toward the centralization of power is indicative of the influence of an earlier ideal—the Roman—but it was not to be realized as a permanent solution of the problem of establishing order in European society. The conditions of the time, as we shall presently see, were not favorable. But the ideal of unity, which characterized the medieval period, was never completely lost. The earliest expression of this ideal was found in the Byzantine Empire, which was established before the opening of the Middle Ages, and remained a potent factor in southeastern Europe down to the middle of the fifteenth century.

#### The Byzantine Empire

When the Emperor Constantine moved his capital from Rome to Byzantium—henceforth to be known as Constantinople—in 330 A. D., he had no intention of establishing a new empire; he was merely changing the seat of an old one. The union of the Latin West with the Greek East was, as we have seen, an unnatural one; but East and West continued as a single political union until 395 A. D., when the Roman Empire was divided into two parts, for convenience of administration. For the next eighty-one years there were two lines of emperors, one at Constantinople and one at Rome. They were not regarded as rulers of separate empires, but rather as colleagues jointly ruling a single empire. They were, for all practical purposes, separate, but the political thought of the time was saturated with the idea of world unity, both in church and in state, so the theory of a united empire persisted. In 476 A. D., the Western line of emperors was extinguished, and



the line of demarcation became even more obvious. With the revival of the Empire in the West and the coronation of Charlemagne in 800, the break was very nearly complete; but the Christian Church, with all its political ramifications, still served as a connecting link. How this last bond was snapped in the eleventh century has already been told.<sup>1</sup>

The Eastern empire had become a separate political and religious entity. It purported to carry on the Roman tradition. It adhered to Roman law, and, in the Justinian Code of the sixth century, gave it a definiteness and clarity that was not surpassed until the appearance of the Napoleonic Code, in the early part of the nineteenth century. The government of the Empire in the East was fashioned after the Roman model. Its rulers were regarded as the successors of the Caesars, and they enjoyed the same legal prerogatives. As time went on, however, they fell more and more under the influence of the Orient, and lost most of the Western characteristics associated with the old Roman Empire. Their courts were surrounded with more pomp and circumstance than was ever the case in Rome. The government became a purely military despotism of the Oriental type. Its perpetuation depended almost entirely upon military force. Some justification of this can be found, however, in the fact that it was forever on the defensive; it had constantly to repel the attacks of the barbarians that had long since overrun the Roman Empire in the West. Throughout most of its history, then, the Eastern Empire was practically an armed camp; the army and navy were the life of the state to an extent seldom true of the armed forces in the West.

The Church, too, maintained a position in the state quite different from that occupied by the Church in the West. For centuries the Western Church was the dominant political factor. Though it was itself aristocratic, it often checked and softened the otherwise absolute rule of kings and princes. The Church in the East, on the other hand, was never such a vigorous institution. It was always subservient to the government, and was used to sanction and strengthen the authority of the

<sup>1</sup>See p. 280.

emperors. Therefore, instead of softening an absolute autocracy, the Church helped to make it more despotic.

Constantinople never distinguished itself for efficiency in administration as did Rome, but it did distinguish itself in the conduct of its foreign affairs. It developed guile and diplomacy to the point of a fine art. For centuries its successful resistance to its enemies was due more to craft than to military prowess. It kept the barbarians divided and fighting among themselves. It held back the Mohammedan tide largely through its control of the sea, and it was able to control the sea partly through a series of alliances with the maritime cities of Italy. Then, too, it was partly through Eastern diplomacy that Western Christendom was persuaded to undertake the Crusades, which kept the Moslems engaged on their home grounds for the greater part of two hundred years, and gave the East welcome relief from Moslem attack. Thus did a decadent empire, which had seemed on the brink of disaster for centuries, preserve itself until its final overthrow by the Turks at Constantinople in 1453.

### **The Empire of Charlemagne**

So long as no successful counterclaim was set up in the West, the Byzantine emperors were in a position to maintain a show of authority there; in the accepted theory of the time, the unity of the ancient empire was thus preserved. In the year 800, however, a dramatic event occurred in Rome which established just such a counterclaim. It was then that Charlemagne, able and energetic king of the Franks, was crowned as emperor by the Pope, and before a group of Romans from the Eternal City. The meaning of the event in the minds of those who witnessed it is revealed in the shout that went up: "Long life and victory to Charles, Augustus, crowned of God, the great and peace-giving emperor of the Romans." To them, the episode signified the end of the authority of the Eastern emperors over Rome and over the West generally, and a much-sought relief from the tyrannical pretensions of Constantinople. Charlemagne, then, fell heir to the Roman tradition, for in the theory of the time, his empire was not to be differentiated from the old

Roman Empire which had preceded it. As the event was viewed then, he had merely returned to the West the Empire which, since the year 476, had been transferred to the East. He was the direct successor to the crown of the Caesars, and the sixty-eighth emperor in line from Augustus. When the Carolingian line (the line of Charlemagne) died out, the crown and the tradition passed on to a new dynasty, but there was no break in the legal continuity of the Empire. Though Charlemagne's reign as emperor lasted only fourteen years, and though his empire disintegrated soon after his death, it was, nevertheless, of great significance in the political evolution of medieval Europe.

Charlemagne's lands were not so extensive as those of the old Roman Empire, but they were of impressive proportions. They consisted, roughly, of what is now France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Corsica, and the better part of the Italian peninsula. This vast region had been brought under one authority largely by force of arms. Beginning their career as a people not particularly to be distinguished from other Germanic tribes, the Franks, starting from a region near the mouth of the Rhine, had piled conquest upon conquest among the peoples of western Europe, until the achievement indicated was complete. This mighty enterprise was in no small measure the work of a number of distinguished Frankish kings, among whom Charlemagne stands out as the ablest and most famous—one of the truly significant figures of the Middle Ages. (See Map 10, p. 281.)

Charlemagne's wise and benevolent rule and his devotion to learning and to public improvements made him a unique figure in his age. He kept comparative peace and order in his realm, constructed bridges and public buildings, developed a government that was relatively efficient, and showed an interest in education that was not to be equaled in Europe for centuries. He himself even learned to read and to speak Latin, accomplishments which were rare indeed among the rulers of his day. Finally, he respected the clergy and kept on friendly terms with the Church without, in practice at least, acknowledging its supremacy in temporal affairs.



The Carolingian government was, in form, an absolute, centralized monarchy, all powers being vested in, and emanating from, the emperor. Though patterned after that of Rome, it lacked the elaborate administrative machinery of the Roman state, and was never so efficiently organized. The imperial court consisted of two classes of retainers: *Ministers*, which included the counts of the palace, chamberlains, cellarers, and constables; and *Ministeriales*, or grooms, porters, and other similar functionaries. The king's council, or *curia regis*, served as a sort of cabinet, but was composed entirely of the king's friends, and served in an advisory capacity only. It was a far cry from the responsible cabinets of modern parliamentary governments. The outlying parts of the Empire were ruled through dukes and counts who, nominally holding office for life, were subject to removal by the emperor, and were therefore responsible directly to him. They received no salaries, but were permitted to keep one-third of the taxes or revenues collected in their respective domains. The emperor kept in reasonably close touch with all parts of his realm through royal messengers, or *missi dominici*, who were sent four times a year to the various provinces on tours of inspection. All new laws, or *capitularies* as they were called, were drawn up in general assemblies which met twice each year—in spring and autumn. In effect, however, these laws were little more than edicts or decrees of the emperor.

Theoretically, all freemen might sit in these assemblies, but in practice this was impossible. Because of the great distances involved, poor means of communication, and economic considerations—such as the inability of the freeman to leave his work—only a small fraction could attend. Thus actual control usually lay with the nobles and the members of the king's household, who were always present. Further, if the assembly became recalcitrant, the emperor might issue decrees which had the force of law. The assembly was not, therefore, an effective check upon imperial authority. All freemen were subject to military service, but the army was actually recruited upon a selective basis; hence the profession of arms came to be associated with the nobility or the knightly class. There was

no general system of taxation within the Empire, and none was needed, as the expenses of the state were small. All officials were paid in tolls, privileges, land grants, and the like. Such revenues as the emperor required came from the royal estates, or from special tolls and levies. Indeed, it was customary for him to move from place to place with his retinue, and demand hospitality from his vassals; consequently the maintenance of his court was not a very heavy burden.

### The Holy Roman Empire

In 814 Charlemagne died. His empire at once fell into confusion and soon broke up. The Western empire was gone in fact; but the theory of imperial unity persisted until it was again given a frail embodiment in the tenth century in the creation of the Holy Roman Empire—a frail embodiment, because upon analysis we must agree with Voltaire's famous epigram that it was "neither Holy, Roman, nor an Empire." Its only claim to holiness lay in the fact that its existence enjoyed papal sanction—though the Popes and the emperors were often the bitterest rivals for temporal supremacy. Certainly it was not Roman in any real sense. It never embraced more than half the territory of the old Roman Empire; its capital was never at Rome, and all its rulers were Teutonic, as were most of its subjects. Its claim to *imperium*, too, was weak, because throughout most of its life its authority was only nominal; actual power was wielded by local rulers who were subordinate to the emperor only in theory. Yet the name "Holy Roman Empire" persisted as an embodiment of the old ideal of unity—one church and one empire, the bounds of which were to be coterminous. This idea had become so firmly embedded in the medieval mind that it persisted for centuries after all factual basis for it had disappeared.

The new expression of the imperial ideal was, at the outset, the work of a king of the German peoples, Otto I, of the Saxon line; and, like the empire of Charlemagne, it was largely a creation of military force. Otto was not even a king in Germany, in the ordinary sense. Much of the real political power was in the hands of the great German nobles who had



20. THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE AND ITS DEPENDENCIES ABOUT 1450, SHOWING IMPORTANT FEUDAL POSSESSIONS



elected Otto as their overlord. During his reign and the reigns of a succession of German kings, much time and energy were spent in a fruitless struggle between the king and the German dukes, each party to the conflict bent upon political power for itself.

Otto was ambitious to gain the imperial title, and conditions in Italy favored his design. The Pope and the Italian nobles were engaged in a struggle with the king of Italy, and appealed to the powerful Otto for aid. Otto responded eagerly and his reward was the imperial crown, placed upon his head with due ceremony by the Pope of Rome. Thus was created the first Holy Roman Emperor in 926, and thus, too, began the troublous connection between Germany and Italy. The German emperors were ambitious to restore the ancient political unity of Europe, in order to make facts correspond with theory; but their purpose was never realized. The Holy Roman Empire waxed and waned, but it never embraced an area comparable to that of Charlemagne. Roughly, it contained the German lands, to which were added Bohemia, certain lesser Slavic areas, Burgundy, and most of the Italian peninsula.

As already noted, the Holy Roman Empire was not regarded as a new entity, but merely a continuation of an old one. In reality, it may be said to have begun with the coronation of Charlemagne. Not only did it begin with Charlemagne, but it may be said to have reached its highest development under him, for the authority of the Holy Roman emperors was never in fact comparable to that wielded by him. In the first place, they did not hold the imperial title by inheritance. The office was elective, and, in theory, any prince of Europe, whether German, French, English, Spanish, or Italian, might aspire to the title. The power of selection rested in the hands of a small group of powerful German nobles called Electors, and it was owing to this fact that princes of German blood were regularly chosen.

It is difficult to generalize concerning the real authority of the emperors, for it rose and fell in proportion as strong and capable men or weaker men were raised to the office; but, in

general, it may be said that the imperial power declined after the twelfth century, and by the opening of the modern era it had become but a shadow. There was no imperial treasury, because the emperor had no power to tax; there was no power to impose imperial customs or tariffs, as that was subject to the control of the local kingdoms composing the Empire; and there was no imperial army, except as the emperor could draw from the lands which he ruled directly as king or nobleman. There was an Imperial Diet, but it was not a true legislative body for the Empire. Nor was it a truly representative body, in the modern sense, as it was made up of three houses or estates—the seven electors composing one, the lesser nobles composing another, and representatives from the towns composing a third. The diet was little more than a clearing house for the settlement of differences among individual nobles or groups. Each body, being jealous of its local privileges and power, looked upon the authority of the emperor with utmost suspicion, so that such fundamental legislation as would have created real political unity and would have made the emperor's authority effective, was successfully defeated. Besides, there was the rising power of the Roman Church to clip still further the wings of aspiring emperors. Thus, the imperial title conferred a certain prestige and dignity, but little else. Nevertheless, the Empire staggered on down through the centuries until its final dissolution, in 1806.

### **The medieval Church in politics**

It has already been mentioned that an all-powerful Church which was both a religious and a political institution introduced into medieval political life features that appear strange to us, accustomed as we are to a strict separation of church and state. The preceding descriptions of medieval empires have given us glimpses of papal authority in the crowning of emperors. But there is much more to the political significance of the Church. From the point of view of the magnitude of its plans and pretensions, the Church offers the most impressive example of an attempt to centralize political power during the Middle Ages. It is not necessary to repeat here what

was said in an earlier chapter about the temporal possessions and power of the Church.<sup>1</sup> That information should be borne in mind, however, as we undertake a further examination of the development of the Church as a political institution.

The political functions assumed by the Roman Catholic Church were, in a sense, incidental to its religious aims. They were, nevertheless, tremendous in scope and significance when the Church stood at the peak of its authority. To explain this phenomenon, we must recall the strength of the Church at the beginning of the Middle Ages, as contrasted with the relative weakness of the purely political institutions. The Church was in its pristine vigor when the Roman state fell into decay. The Empire collapsed, but the Church carried on, gathering momentum as it went. The disintegration of civil authority following the collapse of the Empire invited the Church, which was already providing intellectual and spiritual leadership, to assume political leadership in the West. The Church had built up a remarkable organization, based largely upon that of the Roman Empire itself, and practically coextensive with it. The Church organization, from Pope to parish priest, closely paralleled that of the Empire, and its territorial subdivisions corresponded with those of the Empire. If we add to all this the power which naturally accrued to the Church from its immense landholdings and the influence of the clergy over the minds of the people, we shall not find it surprising that when the time became ripe it should attempt to assume political supremacy in Europe. As the sole remaining unifying force, it seemed only natural for the Church to pick up the scepter that fell from the lifeless hand of the Roman state.

The time was not propitious for the assumption of Church supremacy in the early centuries of the Middle Ages. Tradition strongly supported the political supremacy of the emperor. During the closing years of the Roman Empire the belief had been widely held that the Empire was eternal, and that "God had appointed the emperor to rule over the world, giving him supremacy over it." This belief was obviously consistent with the theory of imperial unity which persisted

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 275-277.



during the Middle Ages. If such a belief could be realized in fact, the Church must obviously take a subordinate position in relation to the state. To a considerable degree Charlemagne was able to maintain the supremacy of the state, but history was preparing the way for a growth of church authority that was destined to overshadow the authority of princes. The very weakness of political authority invited the Church to take an aggressive stand. In the eleventh century, as we shall learn presently, the feebleness of the imperial government led to a period of extreme confusion and disorder in Europe. Toward the end of that century, Gregory VII came to the papal throne, and through his remarkable zeal and energy, the claims of the Church were advanced to new heights.

### **Papal claims to supremacy**

The papal theory which Gregory enunciated stood in direct opposition to the claims of imperial supremacy. According to the doctrine which came to be known as the Petrine theory, Christ had designated the Apostle Peter as his successor on earth. "Our Lord, Jesus Christ," said Gregory, "has made the blessed St. Peter ruler over the kingdoms of this world." The significance of this supposed event, as the papacy viewed it, was that the Church, standing at the head of God's kingdom on earth, was eternal, and "in place of the emperor, the Pope was, by divine right, the ruler of the world, having a right to make and depose emperors and kings." In any conflict between temporal and spiritual authority the Church held that the latter possessed the superior position, for temporal authority is a material and therefore an ephemeral thing, while the spiritual is of God and eternal. Thus the Popes were to be the arbiters in the temporal concerns of princes, since princes held their power as a kind of trusteeship, and were amenable to the Church for the execution of their trust in accordance with Christian principles. Failing in such duty, they might be disciplined by excommunication and by the absolving of their subjects from allegiance. As Popes had the power to make kings and emperors, so did they have the authority to unmake them by deposing them.

Such, in brief, was the theory of papal supremacy. The Popes were never able to realize their claims entirely, but they did succeed to a considerable degree for a time, as circumstances distinctly favored their ambitions. In this connection, the comparative feebleness of contemporary political institutions must not be forgotten. The medieval princes had grown accustomed to leaning upon the powerful Church for aid in the solution of their problems. The Popes, being called in to support the ambitions of princes, or to act as arbiters, demanded and received their rewards. In one such instance, Charlemagne's father had given valuable lands to the Church. Far more spectacular was the Donation of Constantine, in the fourth century, by which the Emperor Constantine, in return for a miraculous cure performed upon him by Pope Sylvester, was said to have given to the Pope and his successors wide lands and to have conferred upon them a "constitutional sovereignty over all the West." Much later the whole episode was proved to be a myth, and the document supporting it a forgery, but for the time being it exerted some influence in support of the papal claims. Numerous quotations from the Scriptures were used to bolster up the position of the Church, but more powerful, perhaps, was the appeal which the Popes were able to make to history. The anointing of kings and emperors and their coronation at the hands of the Popes had furnished a basis for the assertion that the authority of the princes was derived from the power of the Church. Upon such foundations did the temporal power of the Church rise to its heights in the middle centuries of the medieval period. After the thirteenth century, however, this power declined steadily in the face of the development of strong national monarchies.

### **The Papal States in Italy**

Finally, in considering the role which the medieval Church played in the field of politics, it must not be forgotten that the Popes gradually established their rule over a considerable part of the Italian peninsula—the so-called Papal States, lying north and south of the Tiber River, with their capital at Rome. The territorial origin of this principality was a grant of certain

Italian lands to the Popes; later, neighboring lands were added by the activities of the Popes themselves. When the time seemed favorable they proclaimed their sovereignty over Rome and the surrounding territory. By the close of the Middle Ages they had come to exercise in their Italian possessions powers like those of lay princes, and they freely involved themselves in the diplomacy and intrigue which characterized politics and international relations throughout the checkered career of the peninsula. Not until after the unification of Italy was completed (1870) did the Popes relinquish their temporal authority in the Papal States, and then only after a decisive defeat by the Italian armies.

### THE TREND TOWARD POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION

It is quite clear that the Roman conception of unity exerted a powerful influence upon the imagination of medieval rulers and upon political institutions. But a mere theory of the state is difficult of realization if the facts of life are opposed. So it was in this case; the theory persisted, but political realities did not conform. The high point in the effort to make theory and fact coincide in the West came with the establishment of Charlemagne's empire, but his achievements, impressive as they were, fell far short of the complete realization of the ideal. With the breaking up of his empire, a countermovement set in toward political localism. The establishment of the Holy Roman Empire also meant centralization in theory, but it too proved ineffective to check the growth of local political authority.

#### The collapse of imperial authority

The influences that thwarted the realization of a universal state in Europe present too tangled a skein to unravel here. But the situation offers the student of human institutions a point of interest which should not be wholly overlooked. The collapse of the Carolingian empire illustrates well the circumstances under which institutions may change or pass away. The relaxing of the strong and able hands of Charlemagne is



not the explanation of the collapse. Even had his statesmanship continued it could only have slowed up the process of decentralization; when the empire he built passed to weaker hands, the process was quickened. The essential fact was that the government was no longer capable of exercising the functions of a state. It could not keep order within, and it could not defend its people against dangers from without. The weakness of the rulers, combined with the absence of adequate means of communication and transportation, made government helpless during a critical period when strong political authority was needed.

The establishment of the Mohammedan power in northern Africa and Spain, alluded to earlier in this volume, exposed the European communities along the Mediterranean to constant attack. The ninth and tenth centuries saw new dangers added along the northern and western frontiers of Christendom when conditions in the region of the Baltic Sea set in motion fresh bands of Germanic invaders, the Norsemen, or Northmen. Taking to the sea, these hardy, warlike people made discoveries and settlements in Iceland and Greenland, made conquests in the British Isles, forced a landing in France and founded the Duchy of Normandy, launched their war craft on the rivers and penetrated far into the more civilized lands to the south. These events largely created the crisis which the government was helpless to meet. The result was that great nobles everywhere organized the populations of their locality for the defense of their lives and property. Such, baldly put, were the beginnings of a great decentralizing movement that flowered in feudalism and the feudal system.

### **The feudal system**

The institutions of feudalism seem to grow logically out of such conditions as we have described as existing in Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries. This is evidenced by the fact that feudalism was not peculiar either to the Middle Ages or to Europe. Some species of it has existed in eras separated by many centuries in time, and in regions as widely separated as Egypt, Japan, and Madagascar. But it is with the feudalism

of medieval Europe that we are primarily concerned. Its roots may be found in both Roman and Teutonic institutions, and vestiges of it persisted well into the modern era, but it reached its fullest development in the latter half of the Middle Ages.

If the lands ruled over by a feudal noble—a duke, a count, an earl, or a baron—were extensive, he usually divided his holdings among other nobles, who, in turn, might subdivide what they had received among still other nobles. Those who acquired land in this manner became the *vassals* of him who had bestowed it. Thus most lords were also vassals, and there came into being an extensive hierarchy of nobles and vassals. Between vassal and lord there existed a contract sealed by a solemn oath. Under this contract the vassal entered into a relationship with his overlord which permitted the latter not only to administer the affairs of local government, but to perform acts which, at first sight, appear to be the functions of a sovereign state. First, under the feudal contract, the vassal was obligated to make payments to his lord at stated times, and under stated conditions. Second, he was bound to aid in government by furnishing counsel to his lord, and by sitting in the feudal courts. Third, he was bound to furnish a stipulated number of armed knights for service in the overlord's army when occasion should demand. It was in return for these services that he received and was permitted to occupy his lands.

Thus the feudal lord was much like an independent prince, and his organized feudal domain much like a sovereign state. He had feudal revenues from his vassals, and material support from still other sources, all of which were due him by virtue of his authority as lord. He enjoyed judicial powers exercised through his own feudal courts, the jurisdiction of which might not ordinarily be invaded, and he commanded an army as truly as any independent prince. He might exact dues from those who transported goods over his domain, and in some cases he enjoyed the right to establish his own system of coinage. He might even enter into political alliances with other nobles or with kings. Did, then, these political entities constitute

sovereign states? The term is sometimes applied to them, but such designation is open to question. It can hardly be said that a noble is sovereign who is himself a vassal to some other lord. According to feudal theory he could not be wholly independent. In reality, however, he might make himself independent if he could muster sufficient military strength to defy his overlord successfully, for this was the Age of Force, when solemn oaths and feudal contracts were too weak to hold an ambitious vassal who might possess superior power. For a considerable time the dukes of Normandy were thus independent in fact, by reason of the reduction of their vassals to a state of submission and of their decisive defeat of the king of France, who was their overlord. Even though the term "state" might perhaps be applied in the case of Normandy, it would not be accurate to designate all feudal entities as states.

With the establishment of the feudal system in practically all of Europe there came into existence many hundreds of virtually independent local governments ruled by petty feudal nobles who maneuvered their armies in perpetual warfare to maintain or extend their power and prestige. There were kings, to be sure, but their authority was little more than nominal except over lands which they ruled directly—that is to say, the lands which they ruled as feudal lords. In fact, some of their lands they themselves held as vassals. King John of England held the English realm as a fief from the Pope, and the Continental lands of the Norman kings of England were held as fiefs of the king of France. Thus, the kings were little more than glorified feudal nobles. The medieval Church, too, was drawn into the feudal system, since it owned land which was sublet to vassals on feudal tenure. It did, however, do all in its power to ameliorate the evils of feudalism. In the interest of peace it devised the "Truce of God" and the "Peace of God"—holidays when fighting was forbidden—and it hallowed the practices of chivalry, such as aid to the weak and defenseless, and generosity to the vanquished. (See Map 20, p. 643.)

The feudal system is commonly conceived of as embracing two sets of quite different relations: (1) the relations between



lord and vassal, which were honorable relations between nobles, that is, between social equals who belonged to the ruling and fighting class, and (2) the relations between noble and ignoble, or relations between the socially superior and the socially inferior. The former were the bases of the feudal system proper, and the latter of the manorial system. The two sets of relations were intimately bound up with each other, but they are clearly distinguishable and should not be confused. Feudalism was a form of local, private government; the manorial system, as indicated in an earlier chapter, was a form of economic organization. The latter served as the physical foundation upon which the former rested, and by which it was sustained. The manorial system existed before feudalism was established, and it remained after feudalism was destroyed. As a form of government, feudalism was little better than organized confusion, but it served society as something better than complete anarchy during that interval of something like five centuries between the collapse of centralized government and the rise of the national states.

### **The city-states**

For some time, side by side with the so-called feudal states there existed another form of local political organization—the city-states. How did they arise? The physical basis of feudalism was agriculture; the feudal nobility constituted a landed aristocracy, the position and power of which were derived from landed possessions. It will be recalled that in the eleventh century there appeared in European society a burgher class whose interests were industrial and commercial rather than agricultural. These dwellers in the towns, like the dwellers on the manorial estates, were at first under the authority of the nobles to whom they were obligated to pay certain dues. But from their very character, industrial and commercial pursuits did not fit into the manorial arrangement of agricultural society. The economic interests of the burghers were sharply opposed to those of the feudal nobility. The burgher longed for peace, law, and order; the feudal nobles comprised a class born to rule and to fight, to whom war was

the highly esteemed instrument of glory and all else that made life worth living. This conflict of aims and interests found expression in a struggle between the two classes, resulting finally in the emancipation of the towns from feudal authority. Towns able to cut the bonds completely became independent, and organized their communities into city-states. Even those not so fortunate were able to attain a degree of local autonomy that set them apart politically from those who dwelt on the manor.

The towns, as we have seen, appeared for the most part at points of strategic importance in matters of trade and industry—along the Mediterranean, particularly in the Italian peninsula; in the Baltic region; in the Lowlands; along the water-courses and other important highways of internal trade. Italy, in the Middle Ages, was a veritable congeries of these burgher communities called communes.

The communes of Italy developed into city-states by a series of gradual political changes. When the authority of the Church declined, officers called consuls began to replace the ecclesiastical authorities who had set themselves up at the time of the dissolution of the Roman Empire. The consuls, themselves formerly subservient to emperor or Pope, now came to occupy the position of presidents of small, independent commonwealths. Out of these communes grew the cities, foremost among which were Venice, Florence, Milan, Genoa, Pisa, Pavia, Verona, Padua, Piacenza, Parma, Modena, Reggio, Bologna, Ravenna, Lucca, and Siena.<sup>1</sup> These great cities often held sway over the smaller cities in their immediate vicinity, and they frequently fought with one another for commercial supremacy. (See Map 11, p. 313.)

Though the city-states in Italy arose as democratic republics in form, they were by no means pure democracies. At first, all legislative power belonged to general assemblies which met and approved the measures proposed to them by shouting "*Fiat! Fiat!*" But this was purely formal. There was no parliamentary organization and no debate, and the assemblies

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<sup>1</sup>Rome, of course, was the foremost city in Italy, but its growth far antedates that of the commune, which was of little importance before the tenth century.

rarely did more than assent to measures proposed by the consuls. Further, these bodies were not truly representative, being, as a rule, composed of members of notable families—or at least dominated by them. Gradually the meetings of the assemblies became less frequent and less significant until in the later years of the city-states, the militia was the nearest approach to a popular assembly. From this stage on there was a gradual narrowing of real authority to fewer and fewer men and a steady weakening of the elective process in the choice of magistrates. During the fourteenth century administrative authority was vested in a single, or principal, magistrate called the *podesta*, who may be likened to the modern city-manager, except that the responsibility of the *podesta* for his acts was not so effectively defined. He was usually, though not always, an outsider, chosen for his administrative ability. He had command of the army and the police force, and directed all internal affairs, though he was not supposed to control legislation or foreign affairs. From this point, the transition to complete dictatorship was relatively brief and simple. Though the fiction of election and responsibility continued, by the end of the Middle Ages most of the Italian city-states had fallen under virtual dictators—as the Pope in Rome, the dukes in Naples and Ravenna, and the doges in Venice and Genoa, who ruled through bureaucracies composed of dependent nobles.

The German cities on the shores of the North and Baltic seas developed somewhat later than the Italian cities. They came to occupy a position of practical independence, limited only by the fact that they formed themselves, for commercial purposes, into a sort of confederation called the Hanseatic League. One advantage of this confederation was that there was less rivalry and warfare among these northern cities than among those in Italy. The governments of the Hanse towns made little pretense of direct democracy, yet they never became wholly autocratic or despotic. Instead, they were plutocratic from first to last. The patrician merchants kept affairs pretty largely in their own hands through their control of the *raths* or councils, though occasionally they were forced to compromise with the burghers or with craft guilds. Small



merchants and working men had very little voice in government, except through their trade or craft guilds, each guild enjoying a measure of political autonomy, with corresponding authority over its members.

The government of the League—if it can be called a government—was carried on through an assembly called the *Hansetage*, which was irregularly held and scantily attended. The League made no attempt to regulate the internal affairs of its member cities, but confined its activities to the protection of trade routes and the adjustment of commercial disputes. There was nothing corresponding to a federal executive or judiciary. The expenses of the League were met by direct levies on the merchants of the Hanse, rather than by contributions made by the member cities.

### THE EMERGENCE OF THE NATIONAL STATES

To one living in the twentieth century all these political forms may appear strange—a conglomeration of universal empires, feudal baronies, and city-states. They look strange because national states are now the approved political style. How did it come about that the medieval political organizations lost their hold upon society, and Europe came to be divided into political units called national states? The forces of nationalism, which produced the change, were discernible in some parts of Europe even in the early centuries of the Middle Ages, but they did not emerge triumphant until near the end of the period. In Western history, nationalism has been like a river with many tributaries. As it flowed it gained momentum, and in the nineteenth century it became an irresistible flood. An understanding of nationalism is important, for it has probably had more influence upon contemporary civilization than any other single force.

#### The nation as a cultural unit

In an earlier chapter it was pointed out that the word *nation* originally signified a group held together by the ties of kinship. Used as a term to characterize social groupings in modern

times it refers to a people bound together by a spirit of unity arising generally from the possession of a common culture. Members of the national group have a sense of solidarity, a consciousness of belonging together or having fundamental interests in common. They are conscious of similar culture traits among themselves and of contrasts between themselves and groups of other nationalities. This sense of solidarity finds expression in patriotism—a love of, and a loyalty to, the cultural traditions and ideals of the group.

The ultimate source of this spirit of unity appears to be a common cultural heritage. Common memories of the past, suffering in a common cause, pride in the common triumphs and achievements, a sense of deep common interest—all enter in. Yet the accidents of history have produced many anomalies in nations. One would expect race to be a basic element in the formation of a nation, and to some extent and in some places it is, but a study of the map of Europe will show that national lines frequently, if not generally, cut across racial lines. In spite of all that is being said about racial purity in some European countries today, there is not a single European nation that embraces a pure racial group. A common language is important in developing a sense of nationality, but even this is not indispensable. The Swiss constitute a nation, yet they embrace three separate linguistic groups—German, French, and Italian. A common religion may be an important bond, but a moment's reflection reveals differences of religious belief in all nations. Great historical emergencies have played a considerable part in the development of nationality. The long dynastic wars in the last centuries of the Middle Ages, in which the French fought to prevent the partition of France by the English kings, slowly awakened a national consciousness in France. The long struggle of the Spanish people to drive out the Moors likewise stimulated national feeling among the hitherto divided Spaniards.

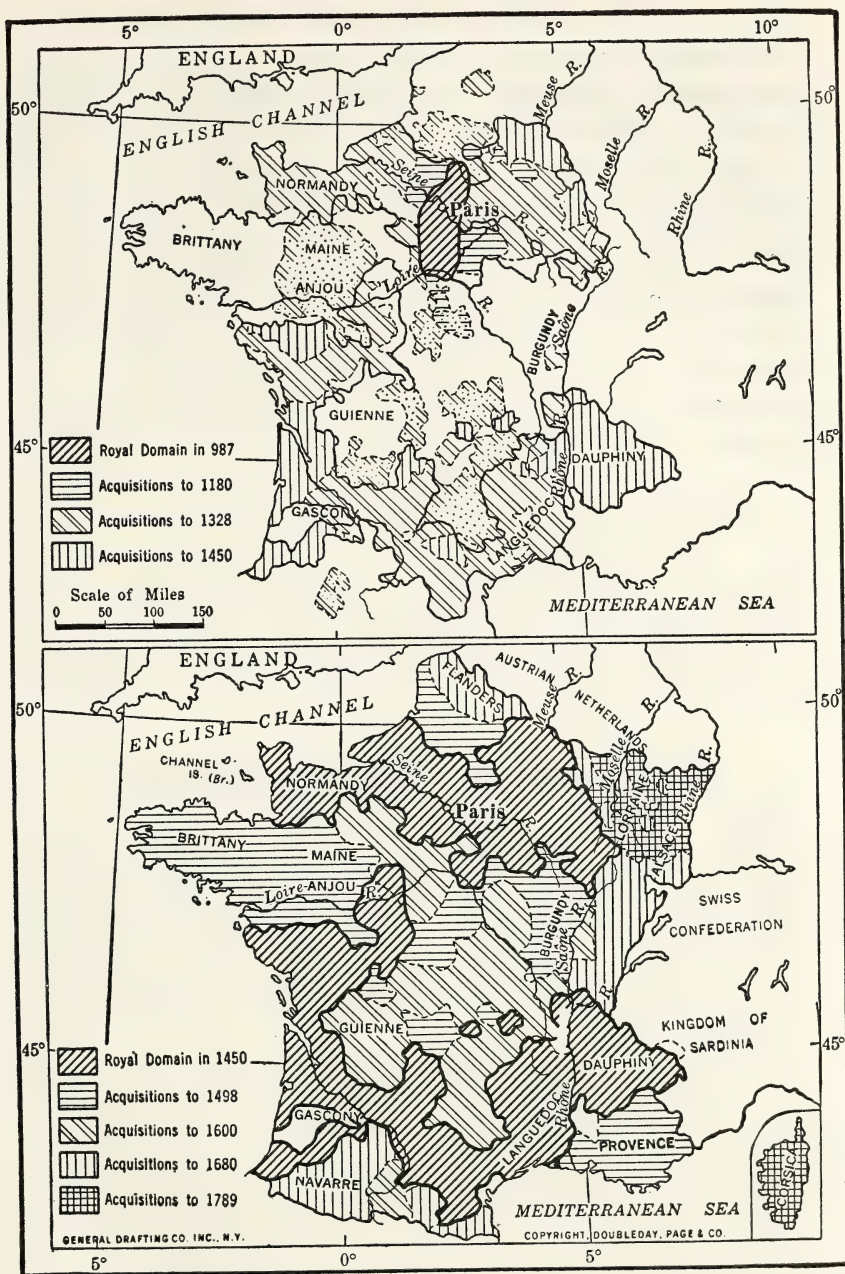
#### **How cultural nations became national states**

All of the forces which we have described have contributed to the growth of the nations of the Western world, but it is to

be doubted that they, unaided, would have created the national states which arose during the late medieval and early modern periods. These early national monarchies were not primarily the result of a conscious desire on the part of their respective peoples to construct politically organized communities. Such an ideal of political union was beyond the experience of the masses, and probably beyond their powers of imagination. It was not until the French Revolution, with its stirring battle cry of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," that nationalism in this sense became a dominant creative force in the building of nation-states. It was then that nationalism, as we know it today, became politically dynamic and well-nigh irresistible. In the earlier period, however, when the absolute monarchies were just emerging as national states, the welding force came from the hammer-like blows of strong princes, whose will to power drove them to unite by conquest the communities within their realms. They beat down the local authority of the feudal nobles by war and diplomacy, they successfully resisted the ambitions of medieval emperors who sought to draw the royal lands into their imitation Roman empires, and they successfully disputed the traditional right of the Popes to interfere in the temporal concerns of kings and princes. Undoubtedly, the monarchs were aided by the fact that a nation and a semblance of nationality had developed, but it was not the people who fought to bring the national monarchy into being. This was done by dynastic armies which seldom knew or cared what the king was about, for there were no national armies in the modern sense. The towns, it is true, usually threw in their lot with the kings, because strong, centralized authority meant peace and good order, and peace and good order meant commercial prosperity. At any rate, it was the rulers, not the masses, who were the master builders of the early national states. Even as late as the nineteenth century, when political nationalism was strong, the unification of Germany and Italy was accomplished to a considerable degree by the efforts of kings and powerful ministers working from above.

Centuries were required to complete the political amalgamation which began in the Middle Ages. Apparently, the unity





21. MAP ILLUSTRATING THE PROGRESS OF NATIONAL UNIFICATION IN FRANCE, TENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

of all Christendom, under either emperor or Pope, was no longer possible, and both feudalism and the city-state had outlived their usefulness in an age of expanding commerce and growing enlightenment. Society was growing tired of the anarchy of the feudal age. Industry and commerce, hampered by the innumerable tolls levied by each petty state through which trade passed, and by the virtual chaos in coinage, weights, and measures, demanded the protection that only a new and more comprehensive economy could give. Thus, there was an urgent need for political organization on a far grander scale than that represented by the feudal barony or the city-state. The process was only well started by the beginning of the modern era. England, France, Portugal, and Spain had taken the lead in this movement, with Holland not far behind. In other countries, it did not reach fruition until well along in the nineteenth century. In still others, it has not been completed even yet, but nationalism today, perhaps as never before, stands out as the most impressive and most important factor in our political life.

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## MODERN GOVERNMENTS: FROM ABSOLUTISM TO DEMOCRACY

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**T**HE CONCLUDING SECTION of the preceding chapter should make it clear that the absolute monarchies which had come into being by the beginning of the modern period were a logical expression of the age that produced them. The localism represented by such medieval institutions as the feudal baronies and the city-states had become outmoded. In their petty conflicting interests, both economic and political, these institutions had created too chaotic a situation. Only under the more comprehensive authority of kings could the antagonisms existing among them be destroyed and a more orderly and coöperative existence be established. That the governments should have become absolute in form is likewise understandable. Rule of the people by the people was within neither the traditions nor the experience of the masses. This was true even in England, with certain qualifications. The vast majority of the people were illiterate and incapable of self-government. Besides, the very nature of the process by which princes had established their authority made for the concentration of power in their hands. For as kings broke the power of the feudal nobles there was no other place for it to lodge except in royal hands; and the same thing holds true for the temporal power taken from the Church. Therefore when we turn to view the political scene in Western civilization in

the seventeenth century we find that the prevailing pattern in political institutions is the absolute monarchy.

Though absolute monarchy set the prevailing style, it is not to be assumed that there was complete uniformity in governmental institutions throughout Europe. As we have seen,<sup>1</sup> there were only five European states that could actually be called "national" states; many historical groups of the same nationality had not yet been politically unified. In Central Europe, for example, there were some three hundred states, large and small, which were merely feudal remnants from the Middle Ages. These were loosely joined under the now moribund Holy Roman Empire. It is true that in these states, whether they were large or small, the ruling prince assumed absolute power and aped the grand manner of the really despotic kings of his age. Inasmuch, however, as these countries were not wholly independent, they departed somewhat from the pattern of absolute monarchy. The important country of Italy likewise deviated in part from absolute monarchy, for the city-states there were still powerful. Holland, too, was an exception; her seven provinces were joined in a federation that conferred considerable political power on the leading burghers. Despite the qualifications just noted, however, the fact remains that absolute monarchy was dominant during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—that is, during the period of the Old Regime.

### ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

The building of the complete structure of absolute monarchy was a long process. The reduction of the feudal nobility to complete submission, the steps by which the towns were deprived of their traditional authority, the elimination or reduction of the temporal powers of the Church—these have been alluded to. Where some form of parliament had existed—diets, Estates-General, Cortes—representing the important classes in society, it was either destroyed altogether or reduced to political impotence. When the process was complete the

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 660.

prince virtually became the state. He was the source of political authority, which radiated from his person over the entire land. He was the fountain of justice; when he spoke, the words of his mouth became law. He imposed the religion of the state upon his subjects, and those few who wished and dared to deviate from the established religious pattern suffered the disabilities and penalties imposed upon heretics and non-conformers. Under the doctrine of mercantilism the subject's economic activity was regulated in detail by royal authority. The intellectual life similarly was directed by the sovereign and the Church in ways that today would seem intolerable. While the lines of this picture were somewhat softened in certain respects in England, they held largely true even there until the Revolution of 1688 put a final end to absolutism in that country.

This comprehensive authority was maintained by a variety of governmental mechanisms and appropriate devices. The royal treasury was supplied by heavy taxes arbitrarily imposed, and, at times, by the exploitation of the mineral resources of the New World. The monarch built up a centralized administrative system, the personnel of which was accountable only to him—in so far as it was accountable to anyone. Nobles and clergy might remain influential in ministerial capacities if they displayed undivided loyalty to the monarch and assisted him in extending his powers and prestige. The nobles, now deprived of political power, were compensated by the enjoyment of special privileges and exemptions and other royal favors; they were given resounding titles, and they were exalted in the pomp and ceremony of the king's court. In the last resort the king could depend on his royal armies to support his authority at home and extend his glory and prestige abroad by war. Thus by force and intrigue and by demonstrations of glory, power, and benevolence, loyalty to, and acceptance of, the monarchy was obtained. To these devices one other must be added, one of extreme importance in explaining the maintenance of absolutism; that is the propagation of the theory of divine right.

As we have seen in our study of Western civilizations, the



idea of associating the right to rule with some aspect of divine authority runs like a thread clear back to the dawn of history. The Pharaohs who ruled Egypt were supposedly descended from the great gods Isis and Osiris; in their veins ran not only the red blood of mankind but also the celestial *ichor* of immortal deities. Since men knew many gods in those days, many other rulers in the Near and Far East were, or claimed to be, similarly fortunate. The petty kings of the Greek city-states also boasted of their descent from the gods. Alexander the Great embraced the idea; so, three centuries later, did the emperors of Rome. The medieval Christian rulers, who could not suppose that their ancestral tree ascended higher than Adam and Eve, adopted the idea in a slightly varied form; they claimed to rule by divine appointment. Thus, the Holy Roman emperors ruled by divine sanction transmitted through the Pope; and some of the Popes themselves attempted to play the role of divinely appointed temporal sovereigns. As we shall see in a moment, this idea of associating kingly authority with divinity continued into the earlier modern period with which this chapter deals. It is not wholly extinct in our own time; the emperor of Japan is still regarded by his subjects as a direct descendant of a sun-goddess. These concepts are of no direct importance in Western politics today, but in several states the formal monarchies and the "blood of royalty" remain as vestiges of the days when "kings were kings." England, which often clings doggedly to the past, is today nominally ruled by a man who could, if he wished, claim descent from the Scandinavian god Woden.

Although the divine-right theory is of no contemporary importance, it was of considerable significance in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in bolstering up the absolutist position. The concept of the divine-right theory held in those centuries contrasted with the medieval view in that the authority of monarchs was no longer to be thought of as dependent on papal sanction.<sup>1</sup> The right to rule came direct from God rather than through the intervention of the Church. The most conspicuous exponent of the idea was Bossuet, a French

<sup>1</sup>See p. 611.

bishop, who was appointed by Louis XIV as tutor to his son and heir. Following the medieval method, Bossuet supported his claims by quotations from the Scriptures. Though man is by nature sociable, he held, man's evil passions render social order impossible without regulation. Under God, monarchy is the most usual and the most ancient, and therefore the most natural form of government; it is strongest and therefore the best. The authority of the king is sacred, paternal, and absolute; his paternalism leads him to provide for the welfare of his people as a father provides for his children. Reason in the monarch is essential and is conferred upon him by God. The king is the image of the majesty of God himself; it is wrong to look upon him as a mere man, it is sacrilege to assail him, there must be absolute submission to him on the part of his subjects. It is the king's duty to maintain justice and religion, to exterminate false religion; but even a false religion is better than none. Though subjects may be persecuted it is still their duty to be obedient. Such was Bossuet's conception of kingship.

The extent to which this concept of the character and authority of the sovereign influenced the acceptance of absolutism cannot be measured. But it is to be remembered that churches were state churches and that they acted generally as the strongest bulwark of royal governments. Bishops and other high ecclesiastical dignitaries were virtually appointees of the king and acted as conservers of tradition. Congregations in all absolutist states were carefully indoctrinated with ideas of the sacred character of the king's position and of the duty of passive obedience to his authority. Church and State went hand in hand, each using its influence and power to protect and preserve the other.

While many of the king's subjects had individual grievances under absolutism it is not to be supposed that the masses cringed unwillingly under this form of government. Most of them accepted the state religions willingly and devoutly. By and large, they enjoyed more freedom than they had had under feudalism, and they had never experienced democratic liberties such as Americans know today. We should remem-

ber that the king was not free of all checks in imposing his decrees upon them. The laws regulating a subject's activities were in large part based upon judicial interpretation of local custom, or, on the European continent, upon the ancient Roman code. It was largely the thinking few, those who had unpleasant encounters with the king's bureaucrats, and those who found the royal decrees interfering with their newly developing commercial and industrial enterprises, who in later years rose up in opposition to royal absolutism.

Undoubtedly absolute monarchy was frequently cruel and destructive. Without question, much innocent blood was shed in wars fought for the sole purpose of satisfying ambitions of the ruler; and heavy and inequitable taxes were paid to support the riotous court splendor of the "Grand Monarchies." Nevertheless, the system contributed much to the advancement of Western civilization. The benefits of political unity and authority were realized, law and order were established within the domains of the state, and economic life was integrated and extended to new fields. Without the establishment of the national state and the development of its administrative machinery, the rise of representative democracy would not have been possible.

With its concentration of power and its well-established techniques, absolute monarchy could be expected to live long in spite of a rising opposition, and to die hard. In such countries as Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey, some of the characteristics of absolutism existed until they were given their deathblow by the World War. And even now, as we shall see later, new political trends, absolutist in their spirit, are becoming a force in modern political life. But early in the day of absolute monarchy—in England, in fact, before absolutism was fully established—a different type of control was taking form.

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT

No definite time or place can be assigned as a starting point for popular government. Examples and precedents may be



found in ancient and medieval times, particularly in the governments of Greece and Rome. But as these early experiments have contributed little to the modern forms, we need not deal with them here. The growth of popular government as we know it was characterized by increasing limitations and restrictions imposed upon the king, together with a transfer of power to parliaments or legislative assemblies which, in theory at least, were representative of a considerable portion of the population. In a typical case, the transfer was accompanied by the establishment of a written constitution which served as a legal basis for the location and division of power in government.

The rise of representative democracies was the significant change in political institutions during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, running more or less parallel in time with the equally significant economic developments known as the Industrial Revolution. In England, to be sure, the change came almost a century earlier. It was in 1688 that through "a glorious revolution" James II was overthrown and the Parliament obtained supremacy in government. Not until the nineteenth century, however, did that Parliament come to possess anything approaching democratic control. Beginning at about the time of the Revolution of 1688 a new political philosophy expounding the right of the people to control their government began gradually to gain recognition;<sup>1</sup> but it was the American Revolution which marked the beginning throughout the Western world of a series of movements designed to establish the democratic principle in fact.

An enumeration of the steps which led to the establishment of popular government would be interesting and enlightening; but space does not allow for full treatment of the subject here. One fact, however, calls for re-emphasis at this point. That is the marked change which had come over society by the eighteenth century in the more advanced countries of Europe. Attention has been called to some of the social consequences of the great commercial revolution of the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 362-364.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 482 ff.

The earlier Middle Ages give us a picture of a society almost wholly agricultural; the eleventh century saw the emergence of towns with their specialized industries and expanding trade; the Renaissance period revealed the presence of rich and flourishing cities in Italy and in The Netherlands. These developments signified the addition to European society of a growing, intelligent, and alert business class—town dwellers, commonly called the bourgeoisie. Then came an event which gave a tremendous impetus to the enlargement and enrichment of the bourgeoisie. That event was the Commercial Revolution, marked by a vast extension of commercial activity and the building of colonial empires. How carefully the absolute kings nursed this business life is revealed in the adoption of the mercantilist policy. The emphasis was now on mercantilism—*commercialism*—in contrast to agriculture. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as was indicated in an earlier chapter,<sup>1</sup> the Industrial Revolution gave additional momentum to this significant social change.

It is only in the light of these altered circumstances that the student can understand the political transformation which spelled the decay of absolutism and a growth toward popular government. History reveals that a demand for power on the part of any class of people is usually a consequence of their well-being rather than of their misery. The rise of a new class, the bourgeoisie, to a position of wealth and economic power was followed by demands on their part for a place in the political sun which previously had shone mostly upon the land-owning nobility and the aristocracy of the church. In justification of the right of this new class to participate in government, their spokesmen, the philosophers, developed the theory of the social contract, a theory based on belief in the equality of men and in a government deriving its powers from the consent of the governed.

Although the immediate purpose of this movement was to gain political power for the bourgeoisie, it resulted in time in an enfranchisement of lower classes as well. The logic of the new political thought left no room for the exclusion of any

<sup>1</sup>See p. 484.

class of people. Furthermore, the strength in legislative bodies of the great nobles and other staunch followers of the king made it necessary that the middle class seek allies if it was to obtain desired parliamentary majorities. Thus many bourgeois political leaders were persuaded to advocate the extension of suffrage to lower classes. However, the permanent establishment of universal manhood suffrage was first achieved on the western frontiers of the United States, where relative equality of men existed in economic and social life as well as in political thought, and where the commonwealth made up solely of these frontier folk determined what qualifications should be prescribed for voters and officeholders.

Changes in government seldom proceed without interruptions. There are bound to be temporary setbacks; and countermovements will, of course, occur from time to time. Setbacks have been the usual result when attempts have been made, by means of revolution, to sweep aside an older regime and establish popular government at a single stroke. The great French Revolution serves as demonstration of the proposition that a general understanding of the principles and methods of the parliamentary system must be inculcated before popular government can function successfully. Today there is a reaction against parliamentary government; whether this is a temporary setback or the beginning of a new movement is not yet clear. One fact is noteworthy, however: in none of the countries which have recently turned to the new forms of dictatorship was the tradition of democratic rule well established in the lives and thought of the people.

### CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT

Popular government is a type of institution. We have learned that every institution is organized around a basic idea, and that this basic idea is accompanied and supported by a number of sentiments, beliefs, and rationalizations. In fact, these beliefs and traditions, together with the pattern of behavior which accompanies them, are the very essence of the institution. Some of the beliefs and traditions are funda-



mental to the fulfillment of the basic idea; others have become associated with the institution through experience and tradition to such a degree that they are almost inseparable features of the institution.

So it is with popular government. In presenting the characteristic features of this system one finds it difficult to separate the fundamental from the purely traditional and sentimental. However, we shall present these characteristic features in order and attempt to point out the relation of each to the basic idea of democracy and to the historical or current beliefs associated with democracy.

It was mentioned above that the growth of popular government was symbolized by the transfer of political power from the monarch to the parliamentary assembly. But that the mere existence of a parliament is not synonymous with popular government becomes clear when we remember that the early parliaments of England represented only the wealthy land-owning classes. Similarly, the fact that elections are held to select representatives or other governmental officials, or to approve the policies of officials, does not prove that a popular government exists. Some contemporary dictatorships retain, in emasculated form, certain of the major processes of democratic government, but they can hardly be classed as popular governments. We must, therefore, analyze with great care the characteristic features of popular government as we conceive it.

The ideal goal that should be sought in popular government, and the basic idea, is "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." This means that government should be a significant and cherished part of the life of all the people; that the sources of governing power should lie with the people and should be exercised by them through active participation in political affairs; and, finally, that the purpose of government should be the production of the greatest possible benefits to the people as a whole. While some individuals may be disqualified from active participation because of age, residence, or other reason, no class of people should be disqualified, and especially no economic class, no matter how poor.

**A representative system a requisite**

Of necessity such a government must be conducted through representatives, and consequently the use of parliamentary bodies chosen by frequent election to embody the will of the people and to present for consideration the wishes of differing groups is considered an essential part of popular government. In these representative bodies the principle of majority rule has been accepted, primarily because it is better than any alternative thus far conceived. But the principle of majority rule does not mean that a majority shall override all minorities. A minority should have the right to be heard, the right to seek the support of others in an attempt to become a majority, and, in some cases, the right to prevent action by a majority. Where fundamental changes are proposed, for example, it may be that an extraordinary majority—such as two-thirds of the membership of the parliamentary body, or a majority in each of two or more separate bodies—should be required before such proposals can be adopted.

The principle of representation necessarily involves the use of a system of election by which each individual is free to express his choice among contesting candidates or between alternative proposals. To assure such freedom of expression the secret ballot is now used; without it individuals could be prevented from expressing their own wills. Representatives are usually chosen from geographic districts, on the theory that they should represent the people as citizens, not as members of any particular economic, religious, or other class. While representation on the basis of class has often been advocated and has sometimes been partially adopted through systems of proportional representation, the leading democracies of today still retain the major features of geographic representation.

In practice, a representative system of government has always led to the development of political parties. Ideally, these parties serve as media through which persons with similar opinions on political problems may more effectively work together to secure the adoption of the program they advocate. In practice, however, a single party may represent people of

a large variety of opinions. Nevertheless, the political parties serve as an effective method of obtaining coöperation and of preventing groups of representatives from binding themselves together for the promotion of their personal interests. In the English-speaking countries voters have been traditionally divided into two major parties of more or less continuous existence, with the result that one or the other of these parties is at almost all times able to muster a majority vote in elections and in the representative assemblies. This results in a relatively permanent leadership in government and general continuity of governmental policy. In the democracies of Continental Europe, on the other hand, the tradition of bipartisanship has never been established; parties are comparatively small and range in number from four or five to more than thirty. Consequently, the establishment of majority control in the legislative body requires the formation of "blocs" through the coalition of two or more independent parties. But the individual parties do not feel compelled to support such a coalition government unless they approve its policies, and as a result coalition governments are relatively unstable and insecure. New coalitions must be formed at frequent intervals, because one party will shift its allegiance and thereby deprive the government of its majority in the legislature.

### **Constitutional basis of popular government**

Just as it would be difficult to conceive of a representative system without elections and political parties, so it would be practically impossible to imagine a democracy without a constitution. In governments which are autocratic or aristocratic the problem of establishing permanent rules respecting organization and powers is of relatively little importance. Theoretically an absolute monarch or dictator may determine for himself what powers he shall exercise, and he may set up and reorganize his subordinate governmental agencies as he sees fit. He is above the law and is not bound by it. This likewise is true in a general way with respect to aristocracies. Their only problem is to draw up some plan by which they may reach agreements among themselves.



In democratic forms of government, however, the problem of organization and the distribution of powers is of fundamental importance. With the exception of the mass meeting of the people in a direct democracy, all of the branches of a democratic government are established merely as agencies of the popular will. It therefore becomes necessary for the people, when they establish a representative form of government, to lay down rules with respect to the structure of the governmental agency, the methods by which that agency shall operate, and the powers which it, or any of its branches, may exercise. Many minor regulations may, of course, be left to the decision of the higher authorities in the government itself; but the fundamental rules must be placed beyond the control of those authorities, either by express legal provision or by custom so well grounded in tradition that no attempt will be made to bring about a change except in response to a clear and unquestionable expression of the popular will.

This body of rules in accordance with which the government of a state operates is known as the constitution. A constitution may take one of a number of forms, depending primarily upon the conditions under which it has been established or developed. For instance, while we in America usually think of a constitution as a single document adopted and amended through some special procedure, we find that the French constitution consists of three documents composed and adopted at different times; and it is often said, though not correctly, that England has no written constitution.

Just as England provides the best illustration of the development of popular government, so does she present the outstanding example of the evolution of constitutional government. For in England it was through a process of placing progressively severe limitations upon the king's prerogative and of prescribing more and more thorough and exact rules for the operation of government—the essential characteristics of a constitution—that popular government was brought into being. Since the development of democracy was gradual, it was natural that the constitution should be built piece by piece. Many of the provisions were committed to writing, in such docu-

ments as the Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights, and in statutes of Parliament regulating the succession to the throne, the suffrage, the powers of the House of Lords, and other similar matters. Other provisions, however, have never been reduced to writing, but have, through custom, received general recognition and acceptance. At no time has it been considered necessary in England to incorporate all of these rules in a single document. Parliament, being legally sovereign, has the power to alter the constitutional rules at will, in the same way as it enacts other laws. In other words, the constitution of England is not a legal instrument, and consequently the courts are not called upon to enforce it except as they enforce all acts of Parliament. But the binding force of tradition, as a foundation of their political institutions, is so deeply rooted in the life of the English people that Parliament does not make important modifications in the constitutional system without a definite mandate from them.

In the United States, on the other hand, a constitution—national or state—is a legal instrument enforceable through judicial process and superior in law to decisions made by the legislative or executive branches of the government for which it was enacted. This fact is due largely to the conditions under which our national constitution was adopted, but also in part to certain traditions and legal practices which had begun to take form prior to American independence and have since won complete acceptance.

The conditions under which our constitution was established differed fundamentally from those under which the British constitution was built. A new state came into life after the American Revolution, and a new government had to be set up. It was therefore necessary to promulgate rules for the government within a relatively short period of time. What could be more natural than an attempt to put all of the essential rules into a single document? Furthermore, the dominant political philosophies of the eighteenth century emphasized the ideas that governments were established by compact, that individuals had certain "unalienable rights" under any government, and that somehow a people could set up a "government

of laws" which could not be manipulated to satisfy the whims of those in authority at any particular time. The result was that limitations upon governments were set down in the form of contracts or "thou-shalt-not" commandments which supposedly could be changed only by some method beyond the control of the governmental authorities.

Other countries, in which absolute governments were overthrown by revolution or forced to concede certain powers to their citizens, followed the American idea of adopting a constitution in the form of a single written document, so that today England is the only state of any consequence that has no document to which it can point as "the Constitution." But few other countries have followed the United States in developing a highly legalistic concept of the constitution.

As our constitution, or any constitution, grows older, it tends to take on a character more and more like that of Great Britain. New rules are set down in writing, partly as formal additions to the original document, but much more frequently in separate documents, such as opinions of our Supreme Court and acts of Congress. In still other cases customs develop, and—like our cabinet system—they often come to be looked upon as essential parts of our constitutional system.

Whatever form a constitution takes, the objects are the same; and it does not matter much whether the rules are laid down in one document, three documents, or an innumerable assortment of documents and unwritten traditions. There is a vital difference, however, between a constitution founded primarily upon tradition and one interpreted as a legal document. In the former the legislative branch, which is that most responsive to the people's will, may modify the rules in any manner it deems wise—subject, of course, to an electoral mandate. Such a constitution is by nature flexible; new problems may be faced and solutions worked out according to the best judgment of the administrators and the representatives of the people. Where the constitution takes the form of a legal document, on the other hand, it can be changed only by the processes specified within itself—which processes are very slow and difficult—or by judicial interpretation of existing provi-



sions. This procedure serves to check hasty action by transient majorities, and may assure the preservation of certain features of a particular governmental system; but, on the other hand, if the judicial branch falls too far out of line with human needs and desires, there is danger that the entire governmental system may break down as a result of the social lag. Only by continual modification can a constitutional system such as ours be made to serve the purpose for which it was established.

### **The function of education and information**

A representative system of government which functions by popular participation through political parties and elections must fail if the people cannot or do not understand, at least in a broad sense, the problems and activities of their government. It is largely for this reason that inmates of state institutions and children are denied the vote. It is also for this reason that, since the rise of democracy, government has assumed the responsibility for providing educational facilities within the reach of all economic classes. Compulsory education at the elementary levels and free education at the middle levels have become essential parts of the democratic state. And since no economic or social class is entitled to a monopoly of public offices, there have also been several movements seeking to improve the caliber of government personnel by providing special training at little or no cost, for those who display exceptional ability and qualities of leadership. But up to the present these movements have made little progress toward their final goal, except in so far as they have been associated with the varying degrees of success in establishing merit systems in the non-policy-determining services of government.

As further insurance of intelligent participation by the citizenry, freedom of expression through speech and press is regarded as essential to popular government. If citizens are to make independent decisions upon vital problems, it is necessary not only that they be able to read and comprehend, but also that essential facts and alternative proposals for action be made known to them. The best assurance that such information will be available to the public exists when each indi-

vidual is free to express himself and to contribute such ideas and arguments as he desires. Consequently democratic constitutions guarantee to the people a high degree of freedom from governmental control of what they write or say. While constitutional guarantees protect the individual against governmental control only, some governments have sought to provide protection against suppression of liberties by non-governmental agencies as well.

### **Democracy and *laissez faire***

Another argument for the guarantee of freedom of speech, press, and religion, and of a number of other forms of liberty in democracy is based on the theory that the primary purpose of government is to promote the happiness of the individual. This idea was propounded in connection with the social-contract theory of government, which is not generally accepted today; but the belief that government exists to promote happiness continues to lend vigor to the desire for economic liberty. Historically, the modern concept of democracy and the concept of economic individualism were born together and became closely linked in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. It was believed—and is still believed—that an individual will be happier and will be able to work out his own problems to his greater satisfaction, if his freedom of action is subject to the least possible control by government. To be sure, there was a reaction against *laissez faire* in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and in recent years governments have placed more and more restrictions upon individual liberties in order to produce a greater equality of opportunity; but in democratic countries it is still considered important that these restrictions be as few as is consistent with public welfare. It is also believed that by such guarantees as those of certain property rights and of the right of fair trial in the open courts the individual should be protected against arbitrary action on the part of public officials. So highly have all these liberties been regarded that both law and tradition have been invoked to restrain governmental interference.

Can democracy exist apart from economic individualism?

Liberal democracy, as we have known it, has been associated definitely with an individualistic economy, in which means of production, transportation, and marketing are in general owned and operated as private enterprises. While it is conceivable that democratic government could exist in a socialistic or communistic state, and while a few of the democracies have shown a distinct trend toward socialism, we are still compelled to admit that every democracy in existence adheres to the general principles of a capitalistic economy.

It would be difficult to determine which of these various types of private rights are essential to the fulfillment of the basic idea of popular government and which should be considered as concepts associated with the basic idea because of their common origin. We cannot isolate and experiment in dealing with social phenomena, and so we cannot discover and define the exact relationship between the basic idea and the accompanying doctrines. We must look upon them all as part of the institution and accept them as characteristic features of modern popular government.

There are, however, some characteristics of modern democracies which we need not accept as essential to the realization of the basic idea of popular government. These are characteristics which we can observe in varied form in different democratic governments, or which appear in a few governments but not in others that may be considered equally democratic. Such characteristics will be treated as variations in the form of popular government. /

### VARIATIONS IN THE FORM OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT

We must be careful not to confuse words with realities. There were times when the word "monarchy" meant hereditary autocracy; when "republic" referred to a government by representative bodies; and when "democracy" meant only a government in which citizens participated directly in the determination of policies at popular assemblies or mass meetings. Today those terms do not convey such distinct meanings. True, a modern "monarchy" has a hereditary titular head; but



such a prince seldom exercises any great authority, and, as in England today, the state which he "rules" may have a highly developed form of popular government. In the minds of the average person "republic" and "democracy" have become practically synonymous terms.<sup>1</sup> To be sure, we can find some illustrations of "direct" or "pure" democracy—in a few local subdivisions of the United States, in some of the Swiss cantons, and to a degree in certain ancient and medieval city-states; but such a system cannot serve a modern national state, and for that reason a representative assembly has been listed above as an essential feature of popular government.

There are, of course, numerous variations in the organization of popular government in different national states. Each government has a life history of its own, and each has developed characteristics peculiar to its own environment. For the most part, however, these differences are not of sufficient importance to warrant consideration in a discussion as general as this.

Some of the major variations will be considered, especially where one or another type of organization within a particular state is regarded by its citizens as essential to the existence of popular government as they understand it. These variations usually occur in the distribution of powers and activities among the various branches of government.

### **Federal and unitary governments**

The first of these distinctive variations concerns the distribution of political authority among constituent parts of the state. In every state of any size some of the functions of government are necessarily devolved upon relatively minor governments having jurisdiction over territorial subdivisions. The relationship between the central government and these

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<sup>1</sup>Students of government distinguish between these terms, however. A "republic" is a state that is governed by a representative body and an elective chief executive, and the final authority may rest with a limited number of people. But in recent years "republics" have usually been associated with popular control. Democracy, on the other hand, is any government in which final control rests with the people as a whole; in its outward form it may be a monarchy, a republic, or a pure democracy—that is, one in which the people control without representatives.

provincial governments varies from state to state. On the basis of this relationship, governments have been classified as either *unitary* or *federal*. The classification depends, not upon the mere existence of governmental subdivisions similar to our states, nor upon the division of functions between the central and provincial governments at any particular time, but upon the constitutional authority of the central and local governments with respect to each other.

In a unitary government all of the powers granted by the national constitution are, in the final analysis, possessed by the central government. The central government may establish local governments, and it may delegate to them some of its powers; but the powers thus delegated may be exercised by the local governments only so long as the central government sees fit. The central government may overrule the local governments at any time; it may redistribute the powers whenever it sees fit; or, legally, it may deprive the local governments of all authority and abolish them. France and England are typical examples of the unitary plan, and in a general way the relationships between our own states and the local governments within those states have the characteristics of this system of government.

The essential characteristic of federal government is a division of authority between the central government and the governments of the principal political subdivisions of the state. The powers of each are defined by the constitution, which the central government cannot change of its own accord. Any important change in the distribution of powers requires the consent of a prescribed proportion of the member provinces, or of the electorate of the entire nation. Since disputes over the allocation of powers are inevitable, it is necessary to have a peaceful, and perhaps judicial, method of settling such controversies.

An outstanding illustration of the federal system is the relationship between the national and state governments in our own country. The arrangement is also found in some of the British dominions or commonwealths, in Switzerland, and, until recently, in several central European states. In the

United States the division of authority is prescribed, first, by constitutional delegation of certain powers to the central government, and second, by a provision that powers not so delegated are reserved to the States. In Canada this method of division is exactly reversed.

### **Separation of powers**

Another and more fundamental variation in the form of popular governments concerns the functional distribution of powers within a single government. Just as governmental activities must be distributed among officers and units on a geographic basis, so must they also be distributed on a functional basis. Specialization is as essential in modern government as it is in modern industry. This discussion will be concerned only with the major classes of functions, commonly referred to as legislative, executive, and judicial. The first of these functions concerns the determination of the general policy of the state, the second, with carrying out the policy, and the third, with the settlement of controversies that arise in the application of general policy to specific situations.

These classes of functions exist in any government, and experience has led advocates of popular government to the conclusion that each type of function should involve a distinct type of organization and procedure. For instance, a parliamentary body is essential to popular representation in the determination of policy, whereas a single officer is considered preferable at the head of the administrative branch. What has led to marked differences in the organization of popular government, however, is not the differentiation of functions or of procedures so much as the tendency in some quarters to grant independent authority to the agency which performs each type of function. In other words, all democratic governments are organized on the basis of a separation of functions, but some have incorporated the idea of separation of powers as well.

It was Montesquieu, a French philosopher of the mid-eighteenth century, who, after studying the government of England in contrast to that of his native land, concluded that



individual liberty was secured in England by the distribution of powers among legislative, executive, and judicial departments in such a way that each served as a check upon the others. This analysis of the British government of his time was not entirely correct, and in the British government of today powers are even less distinctly separated; but Montesquieu's treatise had a profound effect upon American political opinion in the latter part of the century, and particularly upon the men who framed our national and state constitutions.

The individualist theory of government dominated American thinking at the time when our independence and unity were established. Concluding, from their knowledge of history, that every government tends to become despotic, and desiring above all to insure individual liberties, the framers of our constitutions sought to restrict governmental activity by setting up three independent agencies, no one of which could exercise complete control. Not only were the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, respectively, given independent existence and separate personnel, but each was given certain checks upon the other two in order that a more perfect equilibrium of authority might be maintained. Among these "checks and balances" are the power of the chief executive to veto legislative acts, the power of the legislature to impeach and remove executive and judicial officers, and the power of the judiciary to determine the constitutionality of legislative acts.

Not all popular governments allow the judiciary power to review legislation; but all democracies recognize the independent status of the judicial branch. Consequently the variations in the separation of governmental functions and powers usually concern the relationship between the legislative and executive branches.

### **Presidential government and cabinet government**

Considered with reference to the relationship between their legislative and executive departments and the character of their executive, most modern democracies fall readily into one or the other of two well-defined classes: (1) presidential gov-

ernment, found in the United States, and in most of the recent or existing democracies of Latin-America; and (2) cabinet government, found in the British commonwealths and in most of the other democracies of the world today. A few governments, such as that of Switzerland, present variations which place them outside both of the classes mentioned.

Here again we must guard against confusing names with forms; for the title of the nominal head of a government, or that of his official advisers, frequently misrepresents the character of the government. France has a "president," but its government is not of the presidential type; nor do we in the United States have a cabinet type of government, though we have a "cabinet." The distinction between the two types lies in the nature of the relationship of the executive to the legislative branch. Since the head of the executive branch almost inevitably becomes a leader in legislative matters, this relationship affects the content of the law as much as, if not more than, it does the administration of existing law.

What, then, is the difference in the relationships of the executive to the legislative branch which determines whether a government is to be classified as *presidential* or *cabinet* in form? In a presidential government the nominal head, whether he be a king, a president, a governor, or a mayor, is the actual head. The method by which he attains office may vary from state to state, or from time to time in the same state; but once he is in office, his tenure is independent of the will of the legislative body (except in extreme cases where he may be impeached and removed from office for treason or crime). His principal powers are conferred upon him by the constitution and are not subject to control by the legislature except in so far as its approval may be necessary to validate certain of his acts. He appoints his official advisers and his principal assistants—in the United States called cabinet members—from without the legislative body and with little or no regard for its desires. These subordinate officials, once appointed, are responsible only to the executive head, and their tenure of office is dependent upon his will.

The relationship of the executive of a presidential govern-

ment to the legislative branch has further distinctive aspects. In matters of legislation the presidential executive makes recommendations and uses various forms of pressure to obtain passage of his measures; but he does not formally introduce bills, nor does he or anyone of his cabinet take part in debate on the floor in the legislative chambers. After bills have been passed by the legislative branch, he has an absolute or qualified veto power. Ordinarily the executive and the legislative branches are controlled by the same political party, with the result that common political interests promote coöperation; but there are times when the legislative policies of the two branches are completely out of accord with one another. In such cases there may be deadlocks between the executive and the legislative body, such, for instance, as occurred during the last years of President Wilson's administration.

In the cabinet type of government—known also as “ministerial,” “parliamentary,” and “responsible” government—the relationship of the executive to the legislative branch is quite different. Such a government has a nominal head—a king or president—who has little or no real power. His function is primarily ceremonial and symbolic.<sup>1</sup> The real executive in the cabinet system of government is the ministry, which consists of persons selected from the party or parties controlling a majority of the votes in the legislative branch of the government. Although these persons are formally appointed by the nominal executive they are actually dependent upon the legislative branch for their tenure of office. When a new “government”—a name given to the ministry—is formed, the nominal executive selects from among the members of the legislative body a person acceptable to the majority of the members to serve as prime minister. With the advice of the prime minister the nominal executive then selects the other ministers, always keeping in mind that it is necessary for the ministry to have the support of a majority in the legislative body. Each minister serves as the head of one executive department and

<sup>1</sup>Some of the democratic constitutions drawn up immediately after the close of the World War, like the constitution of the German Republic and those of some of the other newly constituted states in central Europe, gave the nominal executive somewhat greater independence and power than usual.



is responsible for its administration. Within the ministry there is an inner circle called the "cabinet," which contains some fifteen or twenty members of the ministry. The cabinet members, in addition to their individual duties, serve collectively as a policy-forming agency. They meet periodically under the leadership of the prime minister to determine the policies of the government both in domestic and in foreign affairs. They cannot, of course, pass laws without the approval of the legislative body; but that approval is usually given, for reasons which will be presently explained.

Unlike the executive head of a presidential government, the real executive under the cabinet system has no definite term of office; his tenure depends upon the pleasure of the majority of the members in the legislative body, or in the more powerful branch of a bicameral legislature. The legislative body may at any time overthrow the ministry, either by a direct vote of "lack of confidence" or by a refusal to approve an important policy proposed by the ministry. In such cases the ministry may resign and allow a new "government" to be formed from a majority in the legislative body; or it may—as it usually does in Great Britain—ask the nominal executive to dissolve the legislative body and call a new election. Such requests are always granted by the nominal executive, and thereby the voters are given an opportunity to indicate whether the ministry or the legislative majority enjoys the support of the electorate. When the new legislative body assembles, a ministry is formed from the majority party or parties within the newly elected group, and this ministry in turn remains in office so long as it retains legislative support.

It is apparent, therefore, that there must be agreements in matters of policy between the executive and legislative branches under cabinet government. No deadlock can occur, unless it occurs within the legislative branch. The members of the ministry, being members of the legislative branch, may introduce bills and debate them on the legislative floor. Thus the executive authority, while being a leader in matters of legislation as well as in matters of executing the law, is at all times accountable to the legislative body and remains in power only

so long as it retains the support of that body. As to the nominal head, whether king or president, his part in the governing process is small. He does not select his ministers; he does not control them. No act of his is valid without the countersignature of a minister; and he cannot refuse his signature to a measure passed by the legislative body. The ministry is practically supreme so long as it commands the support of the legislative branch, but it is checked in the arbitrary exercise of its power by the knowledge that it may be turned out of office at any time. Thus all executive authority is vested in a ministry which is at all times accountable to the elected representatives of the people.

It should be clear that the distinction drawn between the presidential and the cabinet type of government is fundamental. It is not a mere distinction between inconsequential forms; it concerns the inner workings of the governmental process, and hence it is of extreme importance. When popular government had become the established pattern to which modern society aspired, the question of constructing political machinery whereby the will of the electorate might be made effective became of primary importance. Under the presidential system communities have attempted to solve the problem in one way; under the cabinet form of government they have sought to solve it in another. Considerable discussion has centered about questions concerning the relative merits of these major types, but we shall defer this bit of speculation to the close of our discussion.

It should be noted here, however, that similarity in outward structure does not produce a similarity in actual operation. Local peculiarities of custom and tradition, as well as diversities in social ideals, have a profound influence upon governmental procedure. For example, in several European democracies the existence of many political parties makes it impossible for the cabinet system to operate as it does in Great Britain. In fact, this is a major defect in many European democracies; for the success of the cabinet system—if not of all representative government—depends upon the willing co-operation of a legislative majority.

### GOVERNMENT IN ITS SOCIAL SETTING

Political institutions, like all institutions, are influenced by the circumstances in which they operate. They must be adapted to the customs and traditions of the community, as well as to the economic and social needs of their times; otherwise they cannot last. We have seen that popular government cannot function among an illiterate people. Likewise a government built around a particular economic system cannot, without modification, function adequately in a widely different economic setting; nor can a government based upon the principles of peaceful toleration by majorities and peaceful submission by minorities serve a people whose differences in opinion and desires are so divergent that neither majorities nor minorities can or will coöperate in peace.

Let us not, therefore, assume that what has worked well for us should work equally well for others, or that what appears to work well for others should be accepted and adopted by us. Nor should we assume that our own political institutions can remain forever unchanged. No existing government can be called perfect. Features in government that are excellent and adequate at one stage of social development may later be rendered obsolete by deep-seated social change. In the contemporary world a rapidly changing social setting makes it imperative that political institutions be permitted to grow vigorously enough to meet the needs of a dynamic society, although they must at the same time remain grounded in the cultural foundation of national custom and tradition.

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## MODERN GOVERNMENTS: THE REACTION AGAINST DEMOCRACY

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**T**HE EMERGENCE of the democratic movement and its development in modern times have been traced in the preceding chapter. In the field of politics it gradually broke down the absolutist institutions and replaced them with constitutional governments based on public opinion, expressed in most instances through popular assemblies, chosen on the basis of a widely extended franchise. The structural forms of these governments varied from time to time and from country to country, but the trends were so consistently in the direction of larger participation by the people in public affairs that there seemed little reason to doubt that political democracy was destined to have a permanent future as the prevailing form of government in the Western world. It is true the World War of 1914-1918 tested it severely, but no democratic state involved in that holocaust collapsed under the strain. On the other hand, the older monarchies fell one after another; and, in the period of postwar reconstruction, the Central Powers and the newly created states in central Europe commonly accepted its basic principles as they planned their political future. The prospects of democracy seemed roseate indeed.

But the unsettled years following the war have presented a very different picture. Everywhere the critics of democracy have become more outspoken. Russia, after the revolution of

1917, instead of turning to the democratic idea, established a socialist dictatorship. Then Italy, Spain, Portugal, and most of the powers of central Europe in turn cast aside the cloak of democracy and established dictatorships in one form or another. Emergency conditions in a feverish world may account in part for this postwar trend, but it is significant to note that the defenders of dictatorship do not rest their arguments on the grounds of emergency. They rather insist that there are certain inherent defects in democratic principles themselves—defects so serious as to warrant their complete and permanent repudiation. The aggressiveness with which some of the dictators extol their position and seek to extend their systems to other countries has placed democracy upon the defensive. Not only is the situation sharpening the antagonisms between the democratic states and the dictatorships, but within the national societies themselves the issue is exciting distrust and suspicions among people and dividing them into groups covertly or openly hostile to one another. This being true it seems appropriate here that the position of democracy be defined. What were the aims and ideals of those who projected its philosophy and those who participated in establishing it? With the democratic position before us we can then pass on to examine the rival forms of government that have come into being since the World War and the claims which their adherents put forth in their support.

## DEMOCRACY AND ITS COROLLARIES

### The democratic process

When popular government first arose, the theory generally advanced to support it was based on the then prevailing ideas of natural law, natural rights, and the social compact. These doctrines appeared as early as the fourteenth century, and, it will be recalled, became a force of great significance in the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth century. According to them, man was regarded as being endowed with freedom and equality as a birthright; they belonged to him as a human being. When, therefore, he is subjected to the coercive power



of the state, as admittedly he must be if he lives in society, this condition of subjection can be justified in reason only when he himself assents to it, and is permitted to share in the exercise of the power which the state wields. Thus government by consent, or government by the people, is founded on the laws of nature; and, it was argued, no other basis for government can be justified at all. According to this theory it mattered not whether man used his political power wisely, or abused it, or neglected to use it at all, for he was, in any case, entitled to it as a matter of right. But at the same time it was generally assumed that the common man possessed sufficient inherent capacity to deal wisely with questions of public concern, and that, if given the opportunity, he could and would divest himself of personal interests and desires, and exercise his civic responsibilities with an eye to public welfare. Indeed, this belief in the potential abilities of the individual, and in his collective wisdom in dealing with questions of public policy, was one of the most striking features of the democratic movement. It was felt that the masses could be relied upon to display good judgment and wise discretion in removing injustices that had been fostered by the traditional governments of the monarchs.

As popular government became established other points were advanced to support the democratic process. For instance, it was asserted that one purpose of government is to promote human happiness; and no one is better qualified than the individual himself to decide what governmental policies will best serve that purpose, since his happiness and contentment is the thing sought. Other solutions may, in the long run, be wiser than those reached by the masses, but they are not so likely to command the loyalty and support of the people. Again, if one is asked to look beyond what is regarded as the immediate happiness of the people, and think of long-range values, the merits of the democratic process seem even more impressive. All proponents of democracy agree that the highest purpose of life is the development of a more social and moral man. Democratic processes contribute to that end by throwing the responsibility for making decisions on the shoulders of the

individual. The choice is his, the mistakes are his own, and through experience he learns to profit by his own errors. If it be conceded that benevolent despots or enlightened aristocracies are capable of planning more statesmanlike programs for the community, any advantages that might accrue are, nevertheless, purchased at the price of net losses to individual progress.

### **Democracy and individual liberty**

But the idea of political democracy was only one aspect of the broader democratic movement. Closely associated with it was the idea that the individual should be left as free as possible to shape his own destiny, without restraints being imposed upon him by government, even when that government was one in which he shared. Popular government meant decisions by majorities, and it was realized that majorities, no less than kings, were capable of being despotic in their treatment of minority groups and private individuals. The ideal of personal liberty, therefore, raised the whole question of whether it was desirable to try to find a sphere of individual freedom, how it could be done, and what guarantees could be established to insure that liberty would be respected by government.

*The doctrine of natural rights.* In the eighteenth century, attempts to answer some of these problems were made by invoking the doctrine of natural rights, which, as noted above, was also used to justify democratic government. Just as one can claim a natural right to participate in the government which controls him, so is he entitled to assert a right to freedom as one of the gifts bestowed by nature upon him as a human being. Freedom meant absence of restraint, and it seemed obvious that the only way to have both freedom and authority was to limit the latter to certain fields, and to recognize liberty of personal action in others. Generally speaking, the sphere of liberty was vaguely summed up in such terms as "life, liberty, and property," or, as expressed in the American Declaration of Independence of 1776, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These constitute innate, or "unalienable" rights, which government itself is designed to protect.

The doctrine of natural rights played a tremendous role in the development of democratic institutions, but it raised some serious problems that proved difficult to answer with complete satisfaction. In the first place, the idea of innate rights, existing apart from the state and limiting the field in which the state should operate, might make it impossible for the state to fulfill its primary task of maintaining peace and order in the community, for disturbances might conceivably arise within those spheres in which the state could not function. Liberty could then easily lead to disorder and chaos. In the second place the vagueness of the term "liberty" presented difficulties. In the absolute sense, liberty is, of course, impossible in any human society. One may leave out of consideration all physical limitations on human action—all limitations of time and space, of environment and physical capacity—even then complete freedom of choice and action could not exist. If it existed for one individual it would be nonexistent for another, for if we all have freedom of choice, the very fact that we all have it would make the object of our choice unattainable for most of us. Moreover, what significance could one's liberty have if no one were inclined to respect it? Claiming it as a natural right would not be effective assurance that one would be able to enjoy it.

*Legal rights.* Difficulties such as these led many to the conclusion that, after all, the value of rights it was thought desirable for the individual to possess depended largely on getting the state to recognize them. Such recognition makes them legal rights and places the authority of the state back of them to insure that they will be respected by all. It was likewise seen that, just as one's rights may mean little unless others are prevented from interfering with them, so liberty may mean nothing unless accompanied by authority to make it effective. Instead, therefore, of being hostile to each other, liberty and authority become necessary to each other. For example, the highways are free for all to use; but it is only when their use is regulated and controlled that they come to be free in any real sense; and the more people exercise their right to use the highways, the more obvious is the necessity for regulation. Rights,



therefore, may be regarded as coming from the state, and the only liberty worth mentioning is liberty under law, or liberty without license or abuse.

More democratic states thus came to recognize the soundness of a policy of establishing in law a sphere of individual liberty, and guaranteeing it against encroachment from other individuals, or from the government itself. This is one of the express purposes of written constitutions, in which rights of this character are stated. They are usually referred to as *civil rights* and include freedom of speech and of the press, freedom of religious worship, freedom of the person, protection of private property, equality before the law, and certain other long recognized rights of persons accused of crimes, such as jury trial, indictment by grand jury, and so on. They should be distinguished from so-called political rights, or rights to share in the processes of government, such as voting, office-holding, jury service, and the like. Civil rights are conferred upon all alike, while political rights are usually limited to those who possess the necessary qualifications as determined by tests for public service established by the state. However, neither civil nor political rights are regarded as absolute, for all are subject to such limitations as may be established by law to prevent abuse. For example, freedom of speech may be curtailed during war, when unbridled liberty might seriously affect its successful conduct and endanger the very existence of the state. The same is true of religious liberty, which is guaranteed, but the outward expression of which is also subject to control and regulation by law to guard against injury to the community.

How are these rights guaranteed? In the United States they are formally stated in our written constitutions. Our rights against the national government are set forth in the Federal Constitution, while those against the state governments are included in the "bills of rights" of the state constitutions. When an individual thinks his rights are threatened by law he can appeal to the courts to protect him; and if the courts find that his appeal is justified, they will refuse to enforce the law because it conflicts with the constitutional guar-

antees. In England, on the other hand, where no written constitutions exist, individual rights are embodied in the common law and in custom. Since these are always subject to alteration at the will of Parliament, rights might seem to be at the mercy of the lawmakers, and accordingly insecure. This would indeed be true were it not for the fact that a zealous public opinion sees to it that Parliament respect traditional liberties, with the result that freedom is probably more extensively enjoyed in England than in any other country of the world.

*Moral rights.* What has just been said concerning the nature of individual rights should not be construed as denying the validity of moral rights. Legal and moral rights are, or may be, very different in nature. By the former is merely meant those rights that are recognized and protected by the state regardless of whether they are right or wrong in the moral sense. Moral rights are those which any individual considers himself justified in claiming, and which others ought to respect. Whether or not they will be respected is left to the conscience of him who threatens them, just as the actual determination of what they are is left to the person who claims them. It is possible that a legal right may include privileges that many would regard as highly immoral, but they are nevertheless protected by the state as long as they remain legal rights. Generally speaking, the attempt is constantly made to get moral rights embodied in the law and recognized as legal rights, but this is never completely achieved. It should be recognized, of course, that all individuals reserve for themselves the right to make moral judgments; and if so-called natural rights discussed above are thought of as moral claims one may make to life, liberty, or property, regardless of what use one may make of them, to that extent the doctrine of natural rights may be said to be valid.

The theory of the rights of the governed against the authority of the established state reached its most extreme expression in the eighteenth-century assertion of the right of revolution. It will be remembered that when the revolting American colonists were in the process of severing the British

connection, they fell back on the political philosophy of John Locke and asserted, in the Declaration of Independence, their right to alter or abolish the existing government. But the right of revolution, from the very nature of things, is a moral right, never a legal one. This must be so, for by revolution is meant any illegal change in the government. It is quite possible to imagine conditions under which a conscientious citizen might feel himself morally justified in trying to overthrow the government under which he lives, and to set up a new one. One must, if he be a moral person, pass judgment on his state and what it does or fails to do, just as he would on his own actions. The state is not above moral law, and ought to conform to it; and the way it can be kept within the bounds of morality is for the citizen to insist on having its actions conform scrupulously to moral codes. The right of revolution, therefore, exists as a final means of compelling one's political organization to conform to what is right. But when we say the state is not above the moral law we do not mean to say that it cannot actually disregard it. It may do so and, unfortunately, does so at times with impunity.

The two ideas that have been discussed—political democracy and individual rights, or civil liberty—came to be regularly accepted as essential features of the democratic movement. Although in theory it is possible to think of them as being separable in the sense that one may exist without the other, yet in practice they have been regarded as necessary supplements to each other. Civil liberties, for instance, have intrinsic merits of their own; but it came to be seen that their perpetuation was vital to democratic government. This was true because popular governments necessarily rest on public opinion which finds expression through the process of voting. The democratic technique thus demands that all varieties of ideas be permitted full expression and circulation through wide channels of communication in order that they may vie with each other in open competition for public acceptance; that untrammelled access to the polls be assured; and that the individual be given complete freedom to unite with others to advance programs in which they believe. Without this minimum of civil liberty



the very foundation of political democracy would speedily be undermined, and the processes of popular government be reduced to a formal farce.

### **The theory of individualism**

During the nineteenth century the notion of individual liberty found its most complete expression in a wide movement looking toward the general removal of all sorts of governmental restraints on the activities of man. With respect to the functions of the state, the idea was accepted that it should confine its activities to a minimum. It could properly furnish protection against external violence and internal disorder, and concern itself generally with keeping the peace. These functions would involve the maintenance of an army and navy, police administration, punishment for crime, administration of justice in the courts, and the imposing and collecting of taxes with which to defray the expenses of the state. Beyond these essentials the state should hesitate to go. The theory envisaged a "free society" in which man not only enjoyed the customary civil liberties, but was left unmolested by state controls in the pursuit of his personal, social, and economic interests. This movement of *individualism*, as it was called, drew its chief inspiration from the general reaction against extreme policies of state intervention found in the earlier modern period of mercantilism—policies which seemed to impede progress in the new industrial era. It won the support not only of adherents of democracy, but of ethical philosophers and economists, who expounded similar doctrines in the fields of business enterprise.

The position of the individualist was defended on the ethical ground that it was wrong to impose restraints on personal activities, because they could only result in retarding the development of man's mental and moral capacities through his own resourcefulness and initiative. Government-imposed restrictions on the strong and capable, or government assistance to the weak and incapable, no matter how humanitarian the motive, should never take the place of self-imposed obligations. In general, the argument was the same as that suggested above

for the support of popular government. It received additional support from new sources after the appearance of Darwin's theory of evolution about the middle of the nineteenth century. Some who were impressed with this theory—that constant struggle for existence, and consequent survival of the fittest, explained the way of progress in the world of nature—concluded that similar laws do and should apply to human society. The path of progress seemed to them to be that of competition and struggle, in the process of which state interference would only retard advancement, and individuality and initiative would be crushed in a regime of state regulation. Thus political control of the social, cultural, and economic activities of man was regarded as not only ethically unjustifiable, but directly opposed to natural progress.

There was much in the doctrine of individualism that seemed to commend itself to those who were disposed favorably toward the democratic way of life. This was particularly true of the emphasis it placed on the dignity and worth of man as a human being, on the virtue of self-reliance, and of individual freedom of judgment and action wherever possible. Perhaps it had its most impressive effects, however, in the realm of economic enterprise, where it contributed to the breaking up of the older state policies of mercantilism and the substitution of state programs of *laissez faire*, and thereby permitted freer flow of world trade and commerce. In the internal economy of industrial states, where the doctrine came to be most widely accepted, it constantly acted as a retarding influence when laws were demanded to protect exploited classes in industry, and consumers in general, against the effects of unfair trade practices and other abuses. When, despite these influences, state intervention came to be more and more frequent, the individualistic philosophy tended to shape much of the resulting legislation into the mold of an individualistic economy, which strove to maintain a system of free competition between individuals, and between independent and competitive economic units. Thus it tended to keep alive the conception of a "free society."

In the preceding paragraphs the attempt has been made to

set forth briefly the modern concept of political democracy and the theories that have become associated with it in the course of its development down to the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. If we fit these ideas together they produce a fairly consistent whole: the insistence on the dignity and worth of the individual regardless of social or economic status, the provision of a form of government which allows the governed active participation, the legal guarantees to the governed of complete freedom in the exercise of their political rights, and the extreme care taken to give the individual the widest scope for a many-sided self-development. Abstractly considered, this body of ideas appeared well calculated to achieve the goals set up by the nineteenth-century reformers.

### OPPOSITION TO THE DEMOCRATIC PROGRAM BEFORE THE WORLD WAR

While the general principles and practices of the democratic program described above came to receive wide acceptance in the Western world, they were nevertheless subjected to searching criticism from time to time. This was particularly true during the second half of the nineteenth century when many became convinced that a state policy of nonintervention in the economic world led to such grave injustices that it ought to be abandoned. The major issue, therefore, centered around the question of the desirability of the state's concerning itself (as well as the extent to which it should do so) with the general welfare by using its power to reshape or control economic institutions that were exhibiting such grave symptoms of disorder as to threaten the well-being of the community. It will be remembered that this reaction against individualism led governments to intervene more and more drastically in economic and social affairs as the nineteenth century wore on.<sup>1</sup> By the twentieth century the policy of state intervention—or *collectivism*, as it is sometimes called—became an accepted policy of the advanced industrial countries of Europe. But despite these inroads the essential structure of individualism persisted as an outstanding characteristic of Western society before the World War.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 384-385.



The most formidable critics of governments in the nineteenth century were the socialists, who found in individualism the most vulnerable point of attack on capitalism; for it was the world of business and finance that most stubbornly defended the individualist theory. However, before presenting the socialists' point of view we should make brief reference to another group who opposed existing political institutions. These were the anarchists.

### Anarchism

The anarchists of the nineteenth century presented a program exactly opposite in character to that of socialism. They waged war on what they regarded as the three great evils of modern society—the political state, private property, and religion. To them the evil inherent in the state was to be found in the principle of *coercion* on which it was based. They believed that all higher civilized life arose from a natural impulse in man to associate with his fellows, which he would normally do without compulsion. To force him to live under a regime of state power retarded his progress toward a higher ethical and better social life. Thus the state was not only an evil thing, but entirely unnecessary, for, if it were abolished, co-operative associations would readily spring up to perform all the useful functions the state now performs. This underlying hostility of the anarchists to the state in any form led all existing governments to look upon anarchism as their most deadly enemy, and careful safeguards were erected against its preaching. However, it never captured many adherents and seems so thoroughly out of harmony with twentieth-century trends that it is not at present regarded as of great significance. This is not true of socialism, which will be considered in more detail.

### Marxian socialism

To understand the ramifications of socialism it seems desirable to recall something of the original doctrines of the founder of the modern socialist movement, Karl Marx. When, in connection with the Revolution of 1848 in France, Marx issued the *Communist Manifesto*, he set the pattern for the whole

series of doctrines now usually referred to as socialism, communism, or communistic anarchism. While the ideas that cluster about these terms are somewhat distinct, they are but phases of one general theme and will be so considered. Marxian socialism is perhaps primarily concerned with economic institutions; but the political implications are of great significance, and it is well to bear in mind that our interest here is with the latter.

Marx, seriously concerned with the plight of the working classes in industry, set for himself the task of finding the reasons for it, and of discovering an answer to the question of whether it was destined to continue. He came to the conclusion that an explanation of all historic change in social institutions centered about the method of producing goods in a given period. In the modern era of private capitalism, the significant factor in production seemed to him to be the presence of two hostile groups—the worker as exploited, and the owner as exploiter. Under capitalism such exploitation must necessarily continue, and as long as it did continue there was no possibility of reconciling the antagonisms between these two classes. The dominant class of bourgeois owners not only oppressed the worker by appropriating to themselves the surplus wealth which the worker alone produced, but his interests and ideas fashioned the pattern for all social institutions associated with the capitalistic system. Of these institutions, the political state merely played the role of organizing the power of the community, and using it to maintain the position of the dominant class it served. In fact, he thought, this had always been the purpose the state serves in society, and would continue to be so as long as classes exist.

However, capitalism, like all other institutions, never remains in *status quo*. As it develops under its own laws of change, it sows the seeds of its own destruction. By concentrating workers in large industrial plants, and centering industry in geographical areas, communication among laborers is facilitated, and labor becomes increasingly aware of its status as a group, and of possible ways of improving that status. The result is the development of stronger class consciousness

which increases in intensity as the condition of the worker grows worse. Labor thus becomes prepared to "assume his historic role," which is that of taking over control of production when capitalism shall have broken down—as presumably it must. When this time arrives, the workers "seize" the political power, and use it to promote their own class interests by driving out the "oppressor" (private capital) from the field of production. The socialist revolution is thus achieved, and out of the ruins of the capitalist state the socialist state emerges. It would appear that this transformation comes about partly as a result of an inevitable process of historical evolution, and partly by being consciously willed and executed. According to Marx, it would probably take the form of violent revolution, although, in capitalistic democratic countries, it might be achieved peacefully through the use of the ballot.

*The transition to communism.* Once established, the socialist state dedicates itself to the usual task of maintaining the interests of the class that has possession of it, which now is labor. This involves the ultimate and complete liquidation of private capital in the economic fields of production and exchange, and with this alteration in the method of producing goods, there will be a gradual change in the forms of all social institutions; these will be made to conform to the new regime. These changes will be brought about by the use of state power, and when the last vestiges of the era of private capitalism have been removed, the way will have been prepared for the next and final stage in social development, which is communism. The socialist state, therefore, is to be regarded merely as a transitional step to prepare the way for the ultimate appearance of communism.

But what is the goal which the Marxian envisages for the future? Generally speaking, it is the development of a society in which class antagonisms do not exist because classes themselves will have disappeared. In the stage of socialism, which precedes communism, all will have become workers or will have been "liquidated." In communism, all will contribute to the production of goods and services in proportion to individual ability, and each will receive from the common wealth of the



community in accordance with his needs. In this fashion the complicated problems of producing enough for all, and of distributing equitably what is produced, will be solved. There will be no private property, at least in capital goods. Since all classes will have disappeared, so too the state will "wither away" from lack of functions to keep it alive. Clothing, food, shelter, and all necessities of life will be supplied to all in need. The complete absence of, or at least drastic limitations on, private property, will have helped to submerge all other private interests in a broader community spirit which thinks of general welfare rather than private interest or personal gain. What must be done will be done without political compulsion. Man will have become conscious of his own destiny by having learned how, in coöperation with his fellows, to utilize the material resources of his environment for the advancement of his own well-being. He will thus look with scorn on religious "superstition" about life in a world to come, for he will have learned how to achieve happiness in this one. At last his life will be one of freedom and equality, for both of which he has constantly yearned in the past.

The basic ideas of communism have appeared in one or another form at various times in past history. One notable example may be found in Plato's *Republic*, in which the famous Greek philosopher accepted communism in property and family relations for the life of the guardians of his ideal state. Small communistic societies have attempted to apply the theory at times, but without permanent success. Most past conceptions of communism have included the thought of a political state as an agency to control and direct the program. Indeed, it would seem that some sort of political control would be equally essential in the modern communistic ideal, although it might well assume forms and functions very different from those associated with the modern state.

#### **Moderate socialism of the revisionists**

After the failure of the Revolution of 1848 many followers of Marx began seriously to question some of his basic assumptions as well as the program he had outlined. The result of

their reflections led them to the conclusion that, while these doctrines needed revision in some particulars, there was, nevertheless, a demonstrated need for some drastic modifications of private capitalism. The revisionists, as they were called, looked forward to a state controlled by the workers of industry who would, after coming into power through the ordinary process of winning elections and obtaining the necessary majorities, legislate out of existence private capital in the important fields of production and exchange. This would be done gradually, as occasion might warrant, and as public support for such a program could be obtained. They questioned the wisdom of undertaking even a mild form of socialism until society had become highly industrialized and the industrial workers actually represented a majority of the people; they agreed that it should never be attempted through violent revolution.

Some of the groups of moderate socialists were inclined to look upon the state, not as an agency to promote particular class interests, even workers' interests, but as a device that should be dedicated to the promotion of the welfare of the community as a whole. This was especially the view of the group known as Fabian socialists, who appeared in England about 1883, and who affected significantly the thought of American socialists. The Fabians would have the state recapture for society portions of the wealth which society itself creates, and which cannot be attributed directly to the efforts of either labor or private capital. It was proposed that this be done through heavy taxation or other devices, the proceeds from which could be used to improve living conditions of the underprivileged, support education for the masses, conserve the resources of the community, and aid in general the promotion of its cultural life. Their program would not affect in any way the customary traditions of free speech or of religion, nor would it interfere with the institution of private property except in important key industries, in land, transportation, and power agencies. These would be *nationalized*, managed, and controlled for public benefit rather than for private profit. All moderates were inclined to look with doubt, if not to reject

outright, the "utopian dream" of communism as approved by the more extreme socialists. They rather regarded the socialist state as a permanently useful and desirable institution with merit of its own.

It will thus be seen that moderate socialists accepted much of the traditional conceptions of democracy. They would use it as a method of achieving their program, and would accept it in the socialist state they would erect. Their major quarrel was with the older state policy of *laissez faire*, which they would abandon for a wide program of state-intervention in social and economic fields, including public ownership and management in respect to the things mentioned above. Socialists such as these have developed strength in all industrial countries, have captured one of the major parties in England, and have had significant influence in shaping political policies.

### THE POSTWAR DICTATORSHIPS

During the period just considered the writings and activities of anarchists and socialists caused deep anxiety to the traditional political parties and the propertied classes. In some countries where liberalism was not yet deeply rooted civil liberties were ignored and attempts were made to suppress socialism by force. But although socialist parties grew in strength and did influence legislation in the general direction of socialism they were nowhere able to capture the state. In other words, no rival forms of government were set up to challenge the democratic systems described earlier in this chapter. For the most part socialism appeared to be an empty threat. Then came the disturbing influence of the World War and the political scene quickly changed. Theories of government fundamentally opposed to democratic ideals were suddenly transformed into functioning political institutions. It is these rival forms of government that we now wish to discuss.

#### The postwar revolutions

With the outbreak of the war in 1914 the democratic countries that were involved proceeded to meet the crisis by re-



vamping their governmental machinery to suit it to wartime emergency. Power was centralized, elections were sometimes abandoned, parliaments yielded to cabinets, and parties put aside their differences in the interests of national unity. However, these concessions to the demands of the hour were rather quickly abandoned at the conclusion of the war, although some of the after effects were felt for years.

Other countries were not so fortunate. The first major change came in Russia, in 1917, while the war was still in progress. Here the decadent regime of the Czars collapsed and a group of moderate socialists, supported by other reform parties, assumed control. They proceeded to plan a democratic constitutional regime designed to last until Russia had completed industrialization and prepare for the inauguration of socialism. However, their mild program failed to win wide support and they were easily displaced, in the same year, by the radical wing of socialists known as Bolsheviks, who shortly afterward changed their name to the Communist Party. This group succeeded in putting down all opposition, internally and externally, brought the war to a conclusion so far as Russia was concerned by a separate treaty with Germany (November, 1918), and consolidated their power under a socialist government that has lasted to the present time.

Italy was the next to succumb. Since the erection of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861 that country had been governed under a parliamentary system patterned after that of England, but without notable success. Forced to struggle with wide illiteracy, a deep-seated localism, and a multiplicity of party groups in parliament whose divergent programs frequently deadlocked the government, it proved inept. The close of the war found Italy badly disorganized economically and politically. Labor disputes and strikes constantly recurred; for a short time in 1920 workers took possession of most of the factories in northern and southern Italy. In 1922 a general strike movement was suppressed by the government, but only with the aid of the Fascist party, organized under Mussolini in 1921. In 1922 the government was faced with a virtual

ultimatum to resign. The Fascists then assumed control and by 1925 definitely broke with the old constitutional system and resorted to outright dictatorship.

Germany was the third great power to abandon constitutional government. After the abdication and flight of the Kaiser in 1918, a government was set up under the Weimar Constitution with liberal and democratic auspices. It seemed to promise success, but the extraordinary conditions with which Germany had to cope in the postwar period contributed finally to the undoing of this liberal experiment. Among these conditions may be mentioned the almost complete collapse of Germany's economic structure, the emergence of an amazing number of political parties in parliament that rendered the government helpless, the impossible burdens imposed by the Versailles treaty, and a wide resentment against the attitude of the victorious powers in reducing Germany to a subordinate position. In 1933 the National Socialist party, under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, assumed command through strictly parliamentary methods, rapidly eliminated all opposition parties, and governed by decree. Other countries of lesser note followed the example of Italy and Germany until, at present, all that remains of the democratic tradition on the continent of Europe is found in the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Belgium, France, and Switzerland. It should be noted, however, that in some of the countries that have accepted dictatorship democracy was never tried, while in none of them could it be said to have had an opportunity to demonstrate its worth.

#### **The Communist government of Russia**

When, in 1917, the left-wing socialists, later known as the Communist party, succeeded in gaining control of the Russian government, they proceeded to establish the first large-scale experiment in socialism known to history. However, because of peculiar conditions in Russia, and owing also to the fact that the contemplated world revolution did not materialize as anticipated, concessions had to be made to reality. The result has been that some features of the Russian regime that attract

the attention of the outside world have appeared which should be regarded as peculiarly Russian and not parts of a program of socialism. The outstanding feature of the political arrangement lies in the maintenance of power in a small, class-conscious party under a dictatorship in the interests of the industrial masses—the proletariat. This party is supreme and directs the entire social, economic, and political life of the country. Through its self-selected head, or dictator, it jealously safeguards its position by permitting no rival parties to exist that might threaten its supremacy, by controlling opinion through rigid censorship and directed education, and by ruthless suppression of all incipient opposition when it shows its head. The business of government is carried on by peoples' commissars, controlled by the Communist party. Instead of a system of representation familiar to democratic countries, *soviets* or assemblies of workers' delegates are organized, ranging from town and provincial soviets to national soviet congresses. Each soviet is, in theory, an independent unit, but, in practice, all its deliberations and decisions are controlled through the party from above. In fact, rigid discipline and regimentation through dictatorship are regarded as necessary devices to train and prepare the people for the society of communism which the socialist state is expected to usher in. It should be noted, however, that the new constitution, promulgated in 1936, makes large concessions to the democratic principle. It provides for a secret ballot in elections based on a broad franchise, and elaborate guarantees of individual liberties—much in the manner of democratic countries; but attempts to apply these principles have not been impressive.

Another aspect of the Russian system is the complete control of the government over the economic life of the community. In a remarkable attempt to industrialize the country and develop a self-sufficient economy, production is planned over periods of years; foreign trade, banking and credit, transportation, and electrical power are monopolies of the state; agriculture is regimented on collectivist farms. Though concessions are at times made to private capital, the latter plays no important part in the economy of the nation. Labor is com-



pletely regimented and used and rewarded as state policy dictates.

### **The Fascist government of Italy**

The Fascist regime in Italy did not at first interfere with the governmental agencies that had been used under the parliamentary system, but eventually most of them receded into the background, and few play an important part in the government today. The kingship is retained for symbolic reasons, but functions of parliament have been assumed by the Grand Council of Fascism, the supreme agency of the sole party permitted—the Fascist. The Council functions under the direction of the *leader* who acts as head of the state and supreme leader of the party that controls it. Associated with the Council is the “Corporative Parliament,” composed of delegates from occupational and professional groups. Local autonomy is completely abolished and all power centers in Rome. An important function of the Corporate Parliament is to collaborate with the *leader*, who may make laws by decree, and to serve as agencies to pass his decisions and ideas on to the masses. It is elected *en masse* from a list chosen by the party, and without opposition candidates. Economically, Fascism claims to have no interest in advancing either socialism or private capitalism. In practice, however, private capitalism is not disturbed, as it is in Russia, although every aspect of economic enterprise is subjected to complete governmental control.

Fascism did not arise on the basis of carefully formulated theories, but, since its appearance, various basic ideas have been advanced to explain it. Of these perhaps the most significant is the almost complete effacement of the individual, except as an instrument to make the national will effective. For the Fascist, it is not the individual, but the nation, that is the most important thing in society. The former can have no claim to rights except the right to share in the national life as directed and controlled by the head of the state. He can concern himself with no interests which conflict with national or public interests. He cannot be permitted to share in the power of the

state, in the sense of aiding to determine its decisions, for he has nothing worth while to contribute. The complexities of national policy and general welfare are beyond his understanding. This applies likewise to all groups and associations of private citizens, all of whom must be regimented under the personality of a leader, whose will is the will of the state. It has been customary for Fascists to reject with scorn the "outmoded, weakening, decadent" concepts of liberty, equality, and democracy, and to glorify the idea of *power*, especially when used for a noble purpose. Fascism has been primarily a national Italian movement; yet it has assumed some international aspects. Fascist parties have appeared in other major countries that permit free party associations. Mussolini has mobilized the entire spiritual, physical, and economic resources of the nation to re-establish an Italian empire.

#### **The National-Socialist government of Germany**

The government of the National Socialists in Germany is, in no sense, a copy of the Italian Fascist system, and yet it bears a striking resemblance to it in fundamentals. Originally it appeared as a movement in socialism, but that portion of its program has apparently been discarded. Here again we find a one-party system that functions on the principle of "leadership," the *leader* being the symbolic as well as actual head of the state. He convenes the Reichstag, or assembly, at his discretion to listen to his pronouncements and carry them back to the people. Laws are made by decree, and with power thus centralized all semblance of local self-government is eradicated. One distinguishing feature of the Nazi regime is the emphasis it places on the virtues of racial, rather than national, unity. A large portion of the energy of Nazi leaders has been devoted to demonstrating the superiority of "the German race" and the necessity of preserving its purity. Not only does this mean that the people who are to be permitted to share in the political, economic, and cultural life of Germany must be of German stock, but it means that Germany must concern herself with the problems of Germans wherever found. This idea has already found expression in the recent absorption of Austria

(1938) and Czechoslovakia (1939) by Nazi Germany, and is regarded as a direct threat to the independence of other neighboring states that contain large German minorities.

When the postwar governments just described are compared one with another it becomes apparent that all of them bear striking resemblances. In the first place, it should be noted that they have arisen in regions of the Western world that have traditionally been accustomed to the monarchical principle in government; all have had little, if any, experience with democratic institutions. All of them function on the non-democratic principle of one exclusive, supreme party with a self-selected *leader* whose word is law and whose judgments are not to be questioned. They are in agreement in discarding the liberal principle of individual liberty. In Russia this principle is regarded as something to be achieved after a slow, painstaking process of renovation under dictatorship; in Italy and Germany, it is denounced as an inherently false philosophy. Finally, all repudiate the conception of a "free" economy, in which the state assumes an attitude of indifference, or intervenes only to correct abuses or to aid private individuals in their economic pursuits. With them broad economic programs are planned by governmental agencies with national objectives in mind, and private wealth and skills are used to serve these objectives. While it must be remembered how widely divergent are the ultimate theoretical objectives of Russian communism and Italian or German Fascism, it should nevertheless be noted that both groups reject the democratic method of achieving them.

#### **The dictators' indictment of democracy**

The rejection of the democratic idea by the Russian Communist is apparently due in part to its close relation in the past to private capitalism. For Fascists and Nazis, the reasons seem more involved. In general, their indictment centers about the alleged ineffectiveness democracies usually display when confronted with problems that recur so frequently in modern life and press for solution. They have proved to be



inept, we are told, because of the endless confusion and delay involved in the process of seeking and recording mass opinions on public policy, and trying to get the rather uncertain results reflected in decisions that have to be made. Elections present a medley of discordant voices, raised in behalf of personal and group interests, that confuse rather than clarify issues; and parliaments degenerate into debating societies apparently unable to reconcile divergent views. This charge has been especially directed against Continental democracies, where parliaments have been filled with numerous small party groups, and majority decisions have been difficult to obtain. But, in general, it holds against all democracies in the sense that they tend to subordinate public welfare to personal and group interests that are fostered and encouraged by the democratic system. To this extent it tends to render ineffective the efforts of government to perform one of its basic functions in society—that of removing social maladjustments in the interest of the general welfare. Fascist critics have also noted the fact that, despite the presumed advantages of a system which arrives at truth and wisdom through free speech and discussion, democracies have yet to find solutions to such problems as unemployment, class conflicts between labor and capital, and others, without sacrificing some of their most cherished traditions.

The Fascist answer to this dilemma of democracy—if such it be—is clear. The solution of the problem, the Fascist declares, can be found only by discarding ideas about liberalism, freedom, and democracy, and substituting such concepts as authority, order, and discipline. By accepting the principle of *leadership*, the disintegrating elements in society are eliminated or stifled; class struggle is abolished or controlled by being subordinated to state policy; confusion of counsel disappears with the elimination of all save one party voice; discussion gives place to acceptance of authoritative command; dissent is made a crime. The result is greater efficiency in the administration of public affairs, wiser decisions on public policy, and less waste and confusion in economic life. In the realm of international relations similar advantages are claimed for Fascism. But here, where power politics plays so decisive a

role, the Fascists assert that the dictatorships possess even greater superiority over the democratic systems. As proof of the validity of these claims, evidence is cited showing numerous physical improvements erected under the new regimes, an awakened national spirit, and an impressive record of diplomatic victories over their rival democratic powers.

Whether the asserted advantages of dictatorship over democracy will be substantiated by the verdict of history remains to be seen. In any event, the question remains whether the superiority attributed to dictatorship is not purchased at too high a price. In the earlier paragraphs of this chapter the case for democracy was presented in some detail. There the attempt was made to show that democracy as historically conceived was far more than a mere system of government. With democracy as a system of government was incorporated a philosophy of life based upon a deep conviction of the supreme values arising from human liberty. If the asserted superiority of dictatorship as a system of government is dependent upon a permanent abandonment of those human values that are an integral part of the democratic way of life, a people accustomed to freedom might well hesitate to pay the price demanded for superior efficiency.

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## PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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**A**LL POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS are man-made, and all political machinery works for society only under the direction of human intelligence. Being man-made and man-operated, no government, however ingeniously contrived, can work perfectly. There have always been, and there always will be, problems of government. The call upon man's intelligence and his moral integrity is perpetual if government is to perform satisfactorily the functions for which it is created. What gives the present period unusual significance is the critical situation confronting democratic governments because of the heavy financial and social burdens laid upon them since the World War and because of the triumphant and threatening spread of the new forms of political absolutism represented by Communism and Totalitarianism. Supporters of each of these systems are seeking, by vigorous propaganda and organization, to promote its adoption in the democratic countries, and the Fascist and Nazi powers are successfully carrying out their "mission" through military conquest. The march of events has clearly placed democracy on the defensive, and the question of survival has become a real and a serious question in all countries where the democratic processes still exist.

### **Democracy's fundamental problem**

Under the existing critical situation the pressing problems of contemporary democracy center about one fundamental

question: What course should be followed to preserve democratic institutions? Recent historical events have contained a warning that has a general bearing on this question. It was pointed out in the preceding chapter<sup>1</sup> that the overwhelming economic and social problems following the World War and the failure of the existing governments to meet those problems in a satisfactory manner had much to do with the establishment of dictatorial systems of government in a number of European states. That the problems are not unique to a few states becomes evident when we realize that advocates of authoritarian government are winning new support in all parts of the world. Many people still insist that democracy is threatened only by the personal activities of "crack-brained" idealists and ambitious schemers; but analytical observers of current trends have been forced to the conclusion that either we must readapt our democratic processes so as to fulfill more effectively the needs of society, or democracy must cease to be. Obviously, the pressing need of readjustment now confronts all democratic governments still in existence, and much of what follows is pertinent to the problems of all of them; but in this chapter we are especially concerned with the situation in the United States.

The principles and ideals of democracy have been presented in the preceding chapter. In view of American traditions and of the sincere desire of almost every citizen that the advantages of democracy be preserved, we are presuming that, of the alternatives mentioned above, readaptation, not extinction, is the solution sought. We are faced, therefore, with the fundamental question: How can democratic institutions be readjusted to a radically altered social and economic situation and so be made to function efficiently? Democracy made to function efficiently need have no fear of dictatorship.

Space does not permit a treatment of all aspects of this broad question. The nature of some of our outstanding social and economic problems has been considered earlier in this work and their relation to governmental policy has been suggested.<sup>2</sup> In

<sup>1</sup>See p. 706 f.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 566 ff.

a fuller discussion of the subject of this chapter further attention might well be given to economic aspects, for problems of government and economic problems are, in the last analysis, inseparable; in fact, we may yet be forced to recognize that the future of democracy depends more upon the nature of our economic organization and technique than upon the organization and technique of political institutions. Here, economic policies are considered only for purposes of illustration, except where their solution seems essential to the maintenance of democracy from a political point of view. International problems likewise may have important bearings upon the present subject, but consideration of them must be left to a later chapter. Finally, in the present chapter, the relative merits of our constitutional system as compared with the constitutional systems of other democracies are not discussed. Changes suggested to improve and strengthen the democratic system, when applied to the American government, involve modifications within the broad outlines of our existing constitutional system. Thus we shall assume the retention of such features as the separation of powers, judicial review, and even the bicameral system in congress.

### AN APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF READJUSTMENT

This brief treatment does not permit a discussion of specific readjustments that should be made. In fact, the United States is not yet prepared to determine the exact needs to be fulfilled or the best methods of fulfilling these needs. To a large extent they must be determined while the readjustment is in process. What we can do at this point is to set forth a few broad principles of procedure that should serve as guides in our approach to the problem of readjustment, and to analyze briefly some of the fundamental problems underlying the maladjustment between political institutions and other social institutions in our twentieth-century democracies.

A cardinal principle of procedure, substantially demonstrated by historical experience, is that political reforms brought into being by a peaceful evolutionary process are, on the whole, more acceptable and more durable than those which are estab-



lished by drastic revolution. If the ship of state, like a ship at sea, could be brought into port and overhauled, or even dismantled and replaced, it might be possible to make drastic changes without evil consequences. But government is a ship that must always be kept afloat—more than that, it must be kept in motion. An attempt, therefore, to tear down and rebuild the entire structure of our government would necessarily involve grave dangers and serious hardships that are seldom worth while in view of the uncertainty of attaining the proposed goal in the end.<sup>1</sup> Wise procedure calls for governmental remodeling, not revolution.

In the second place, it is assumed that wise procedure demands a recognition of the realities of the present social situation. If we wish to plan intelligently a political readjustment designed to fulfill more adequately the needs of a modern industrial society, and if at the same time we wish to retain the fundamentals of democratic procedure, we must seek, with open minds, to understand the nature of our basic problems. To be sure, political institutions, like other institutions, have drifted in the past, and the drifting has not resulted in complete disaster. But drifting cannot continue indefinitely to carry us toward a "better life." Nations have fallen and civilizations have decayed; and in view of the present apparent faltering of democracy, it seems that the direction of the wind is such that a drifting ship will not float along the "promised path of progress."

If we are to assume a point of view from which we can see more clearly the nature of our political problems and from which we can predict more accurately the consequences of proposed solutions, we need an awakening to certain fundamental facts about the society in which we live, about the advantages of our own system of government, and about the events which have led to the overthrow of democratic governments in other parts of the world.

We need to realize that we are living in a new day socially

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<sup>1</sup>The reader should note that the principle of gradual evolution has as its corollary the principle of continuous readjustment, for political rigidity is often the forerunner of political revolution.

and economically. To be sure, we cannot detach ourselves from the past. Our culture has grown out of the past, and it must be rooted in the past if it is to be preserved. We must continue to observe and analyze the experiences of the past and to make use of those experiences which have proved their value. On the other hand, the fact must be recognized that the organization of mankind for purposes of producing and distributing things necessary to supply man's material needs has undergone a complete change from that of a century and a half ago. Is it not reasonable that in this altered social setting government too must undergo considerable alteration if it is to continue to function effectively? The new technology and the corporate organization which have been built up in our economic life make it inevitable that government shall do things which it has never done before and that it shall perform its old functions in new ways. When people insist that the rules of conduct and the functions of government which satisfied an agricultural society should be retained with little or no change in a highly industrialized society, they do so in the face of the danger that, sooner or later, the consequent social lag will result in a breakdown of the entire political system.

There is nothing new or startling in this principle of governmental remodeling in the presence of a changing social setting. The idea of progressive readaptation of social institutions is illustrated throughout history. Our own government has frequently assumed new functions and created new instrumentalities to carry them into effect, functions which sometimes appeared at the time to be radical departures from what had gone before. For example, the invasion of individual liberties hitherto enjoyed under *laissez faire* began late in the nineteenth century with the enactment of the Federal Interstate Commerce Act and the State Railroad and Warehouse Laws. Again, whereas Adam Smith advocated the promotion of free competition through a policy of *laissez faire*, President Theodore Roosevelt sought to accomplish the same end by using the power of government to prevent the establishment of monopolies.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 567-568.

Too long delay in making adjustments may prove disastrous for us, because the threat to democracy comes from within as well as from without. It is important that we have a frank realization that democracy is threatened, not by wild-eyed men with full beards and unkempt hair, or by men who wear colored shirts,<sup>1</sup> but by forces within our economic system. Extensive insecurity, resulting from unemployment and from low prices for agricultural products, may in time lead the economic groups affected to lose confidence in government and in the economic system. If the problems are not solved by moderate adjustments, these classes are likely sooner or later to join the revolutionary factions of the right or the left, and democracy will be forced to abdicate.

We have reason to be concerned about the growth of organizations which have as their objectives the forceful overthrow of our system of government, especially when such organizations take on the characteristics of private armies. But social diseases, like physical diseases, cannot be cured by merely removing the symptoms. As long as the existing political system succeeds in meeting the needs and desires of a large proportion of the people, movements looking toward revolution and other forms of radical change will have few followers. We may conclude, therefore, that rising support for so-called "isms" or "panaceas" is a symptom of maladjustment in our economic and political systems, and that it should lead us to seek the causes and nature of that maladjustment.

Finally, one more word of caution should precede the main discussion. We do not promote the security of democracy by closing our eyes to other systems of government. Every wise military commander studies his enemy. In a democracy the people, who are in supreme command, should know something about the enemy that threatens democracy. By studying the origins and the nature of dictatorships we may prepare ourselves better to guard against the development of conditions which promote the rise of those systems. At the same time,

<sup>1</sup>There may be danger in the fascinating appeal of sleek uniforms and well-disciplined bands of paraders such as displayed by certain Fascistic organizations in America; but such spectacles alone are not enough to induce people to forget the advantages of liberty in democracy.



we may find that some desirable results accomplished under dictatorships can be accomplished equally well by the democratic process. We would be short-sighted if we allowed our national bias to prevent us from profiting by the experiences of other nations.

### DEMOCRACY AND EFFICIENCY

Passing now from the preliminary considerations presented above we may turn to the first aspect of the fundamental problem of making democracy function efficiently under the new demands of contemporary society. This first aspect of the problem concerns the question of increasing the authority of government and the possible effects of such increase upon democratic processes; for, as suggested in preceding paragraphs, government must assume new powers and perform new functions if present-day problems are to be solved.

It has been pointed out that the trend toward increasing governmental authority began in the nineteenth century with the creation of the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission and of railroad commissions in several states. These were only a prelude to the creation of a series of agencies designed to facilitate governmental supervision of economic enterprises. The Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Federal Reserve Board, as well as public-utilities commissions and departments of labor and industrial regulation in state governments, serve as evidence that public authority is shifting more and more to the field of economic control. If we recognize these facts and if we admit, as we must, that the trend shows no signs of halting, then we must face frankly the prospect of continued increases in governmental authority. It is pertinent at this point, therefore, to consider some obligations which must be assumed by citizens and by public officers and employees as they are affected by increased governmental authority.

#### **Responsibility and authority in government**

There are certain principles involved in the successful performance of government irrespective of its form. One of

them has to do with the reciprocal character of responsibility and authority. It requires that government must have the authority and the capacity to perform essential services demanded of it. Students are familiar with the law of physics that for every force there must be an equal and opposing force. Something of the same sort may be said to apply to government; only the balance here is between power and responsibility, rights and obligations. In other words, the government should have powers and rights commensurate with its responsibilities and obligations. The framers of our Constitution recognized this principle when they wrote the provision granting to Congress the power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing [that is, the specifically delegated] powers."

The American people are prone to blame government for the economic misfortunes arising from business failures, from unemployment, and from low prices for farm products. But when they make their complaints—through the ballot or otherwise—they too often forget that the demands which they make also require sacrifices or concessions: they cannot expect government to care for the unemployed without levying taxes upon those who can pay; nor, if they are consistent, can they hold government responsible for low wages and low prices unless they are willing to submit to regulations necessary to maintain wage and price levels. Any intelligent man knows that he cannot reasonably complain about high taxes if he has demanded services which require a substantial increase in public expenditure; neither should he oppose the exercise by the government of those powers necessary to meet responsibilities which the people themselves impose upon government.

### **Governmental authority and the democratic process**

Though we may grant the reasonableness of the principle that governmental authority must be increased in proportion to the demands placed upon it, we are still faced with a question that goes to the heart of the dilemma in which our governments now appear to find themselves. That question is: Can democratic governments assume the position of increased authority

and direction required for the solution of present-day problems without losing the essential characteristics of democracy? In other words, can modern government perform its functions effectively without becoming dictatorial? The question is vital. Since the people of America obviously believe that popular government is worth preserving, our political institutions, however they may be readapted to meet new social needs, should be kept within the ambit of democratic control. It can safely be said that the American people would not grant substantial increases of authority to government if they could be convinced that thereby they were destroying the democratic system of government. It is true that many people do believe that considerable increases of authority reposed in government are incompatible with democratic processes, and this belief is a definite cause of much of the confusion in our political life today (1939). This doubt as to whether democracy can really be efficient and still be democratic is an underlying reason for the faltering of democracy in all parts of the world and helps to explain why its enemies have been able to induce millions of people to surrender to dictatorship, and why its friends who seek to defend it find that "their words result in oratory and their deeds in confusion."<sup>1</sup> But is it necessary to assume that a democracy cannot be efficient? Is it not possible that we can govern *ourselves* efficiently and at the same time exercise the necessary collective authority over *our own* affairs?

Before attempting to answer these questions, let us be clear as to what are the essentials of democracy. We shall then be in a better position to see whether the readaptation of government to meet present demands must necessarily destroy the things which we most prize. What, then, are the fundamentals of democracy?

### **Fundamental doctrines of democracy**

The first basic doctrine of democracy is that the state and government can be justified only in terms of the services rendered to individual human beings. The state is a means to an

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<sup>1</sup>"Business and Government," *Fortune*, June, 1938, p. 51.



end rather than an end in itself, and, that being true, it has no inherent right to claim the allegiance of people within its territory or to exercise control over their affairs. Like other institutions it has been established to satisfy certain basic needs of mankind, and its existence is justified in so far as it fulfills that purpose.

The second doctrine of democracy is that the citizens (who include practically all residents) shall be allowed to participate in government on a basis of equality, and that the ultimate control of government shall rest with the people as a whole.

The third important doctrine of democracy is that government should not tread unduly upon the liberties of the individual. Although liberties are never absolute, and although no constant and specific limits can be set up, sincere proponents of democracy agree that each individual should be allowed as much freedom of action as possible within limits essential to the general welfare. More particularly the liberties of an individual must not be imposed upon by arbitrary acts and decrees of officials. In other words, democracy presumes "a government of laws"—that is, in accordance with rules made known in advance—and not "a government of men" with power to issue arbitrary decrees which apply to specific cases, and which may even be retroactive in their application.

These are the three fundamental doctrines of democracy. The first is the basic justification, while the second and third concern the methods by which the state shall fulfill its purpose. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, other theories and dogmas have come to be associated with democracy in the course of its development;<sup>1</sup> but all are, or should be, designed to preserve these three objectives. Our basic problem, then, resolves itself into this question: Can democracy achieve functional efficiency without sacrificing these fundamentals? The position taken here is that an analysis of the nature of popular control and of functional efficiency, of liberty and of authority, will show that they are not incompatible, and that such incompatibility as may exist is due to traditional beliefs and methods which have developed in our agricultural democracy rather than

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 691 ff.

to the fundamental principles of our democracy. Let us examine these propositions, first, by analyzing the apparent conflict between popular control of government on the one hand, and efficiency on the other.

### **Popular control and efficiency**

The way of democracy is slow—not so slow, perhaps, as some would insist; but certainly action on vital questions must await the collective action of a parliamentary body, if not of the people themselves. On the other hand, modern society moves rapidly. For that reason some people fear that democracy will soon find itself lost in insurmountable political and economic problems. Nevertheless, advocates of democracy agree that popular control is their fundamental objective; that efficiency is not an end in itself. Even when we see the advantages gained in international affairs by dictators who act quickly and decisively, we insist that the deliberate processes of democracy are more desirable in the long run. The process of reaching decisions by discussion and reasoning is necessarily slow; but action based upon intuition with little or no reasoning is apt to produce consequences dangerous to society.

Even though we must admit the greater dispatch of the dictatorships, the conclusion does not follow that democracies cannot acquire the efficiency indispensable to the performance of services vital to society. If this conclusion should be reached by a majority of the people all confidence in democracy would be undermined, and in the end democracy would be lost; for the critical state not only of the world in general, but of our own American society, demands efficiency and dispatch and will not admit of long delay in the formulation and execution of effective plans. In international relations, in the enforcement of criminal laws, in the regulation of economic enterprises, and in the protection of victims of unemployment and of crop failures, government is faced with rapidly changing conditions in which the consequences of delay may be much more serious than would have been the case a century ago. Speed and precision of administrative action must increase with the complexity of

governmental problems, but today we have reached a point at which governmental accomplishment is seriously impaired by functional inefficiency.

If our governments—national, state, and local—are not raised to much higher levels of functional efficiency than they now maintain, the reason will be that we confuse minor characteristics of our democracy with fundamental principles and therefore refuse to discard the former even though they are suited only to an agricultural society. The idea of rotation in office, the enforcement of criminal laws exclusively by local peace officers, and the financing of public education solely by means of local taxes—these produced no serious failures or inequalities in the setting of our nineteenth-century social system. Today, however, when the “brains” of an organized crime ring may never enter the state where the prearranged crimes are committed, when civil servants must be able to analyze and interpret the records of large and complex public utilities corporations, and when the physical wealth is concentrated in a few localities—and not in proportion to population—government cannot accomplish its ends by the old methods. As suggested earlier in this chapter, it would be unwise to cast aside our existing organizations and procedures and set up new ones with one stroke; but we might well analyze our governmental system with a view to making such readjustments as will probably promote the performance of its functions more economically, more effectively, and to the greater satisfaction of the people as a whole.

### **Efficiency through governmental planning**

The first important step in an improvement of our governmental machine should be the establishment of advisory agencies for the purpose of planning long-time governmental programs. Much of the uncertainty and inefficiency in governments today exists because of two important facts: first, that major programs are undertaken without due preparation or without regard for their effect upon the governmental machinery as a whole; and, second, that we have failed to co-ordinate our several programs of action. There are times



when different agencies, each duty-bound under the law to perform its tasks, are actually operating at cross purposes. Planning agencies should seek to promote unification of governmental programs by providing information about existing resources and probable trends, and by setting forth possible goals toward which programs might be directed. These agencies should be engaged in the study of historical background, of experiences among people in other communities, and of the existing conditions which would affect our future activity. Plans based on such studies would not be put into operation immediately; in many cases they might be changed before opportunity arose to put them into operation. Experience in city planning, and to some extent in regional planning, has shown that in spite of the fact that no plan can be acted upon in full within a few years or without being changed from time to time a plan serves as a guide which aids various agencies of government, as well as citizens, in carrying on their respective activities in ways consistent with the general objectives. Every agency of government should be expected to consult with the general planning agencies, and every detail of legislation or administration should be carried out only after its relationship to the general plan has been considered. The educational facilities and other methods should be used to acquaint the citizens with the general nature of such plans, particularly where the plans involve any attempt to set up important goals toward which society as a whole is seeking to move.

The administrative branches of the British civil service operate in part as planning agencies.<sup>1</sup> And recent trends indicate that the need of planning is recognized in many quarters of the United States. The National Resources Committee has been established to provide administrative agencies with information regarding probable future trends that may affect certain phases of governmental activity. Several states have established state planning boards; and some state legislative councils, together with their research staffs, actually, if not consciously, engage in a certain amount of long-time planning.

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Aikin, "The British Bureaucracy and the Origins of Parliamentary Policy," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 33, pp. 26-46; 219-233.

Scientific planning exists in fact in the United States, and an extension of the practice seems probable.

It is urged by some that long-term planning by government is impracticable under our party system, that plans worked out by one party would be abandoned when the opposing party came to power. That conclusion appears to be based upon the assumption that there is little continuity in governmental policy under the two-party system. The weight of evidence afforded by our political history does not support that contention. In the working of our government, party similarities have been more important than party differences, not only in fact, historically, but also as a feature essential to democracy; differences relate mainly to such minor matters as methods and emphasis. The future of democracy itself is dependent upon a substantial consensus of opinion regarding basic policies, and upon a relative continuity of public policy. In the light of such evidence as we now have, the assumption that government planning is incompatible with the democratic system of government is unwarranted.<sup>1</sup>

There are others who are opposed to planning on the ground that the accomplishment of a plan designed for society as a whole will of necessity require a rigid regulation of the activities of individuals. Some say that it is impossible to plan in a democracy because planning fundamentally is in conflict with liberty. These criticisms would no doubt be legitimate if we were to assume that plans should be highly detailed, and that a plan once adopted should be carried through without modification and without exception. If, however, a plan is looked upon as a guide to social activity rather than as a law to be imposed upon the people, it is conceivable that plans may exist and can be carried out to a large extent without regimentation. With or without planning, there can be no such thing as unlimited liberty; liberty can be allowed within the sphere of general plans as well as within the sphere of the undirected development of society. Certainly, if development without objective is doomed to result in the failure of democracy, then liberty is not threatened any more by an attempt to plan than it is by a

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 763; 602-604.

failure to plan. A plan may serve to protect our liberties, not to destroy them.

### Organization for efficiency in legislation

A second step in providing for greater functional efficiency in democratic government brings us to the problem of organization for legislation. Questions concerning the most desirable type of legislative organization have been widely discussed and debated, and a number of proposals have been made looking to greater legislative efficiency. Space does not permit their discussion. Here we can merely point out that any proposed improvements in the organization and procedure of legislative bodies should be weighed in terms of general objectives designed to promote popular control and to expedite the translation of majority opinions into public policy.

Before we proceed to the discussion of this topic the point should be emphasized that modern democracy must be built upon a clear recognition of the difference between *politics* and *administration*, and of the different types of organization necessary to the satisfactory performance of each class of functions. Politics involves the determination of public policy, and the maintenance of popular control is the primary objective. Both proper representation of major interests and opportunities for deliberation are essential, while devices for expedition and dispatch are of secondary importance—except when necessary to prevent undue delay or obstruction by small minority groups. Administration on the other hand is the performance after the policy has been decided upon, and accomplishment with a high degree of economy and good will becomes a primary consideration. Assuming that there is popular control of politics, administration also will remain subject to popular control so long as it accords with predetermined policy. As will be pointed out later, the apparent conflict between popular control and functional efficiency is largely eliminated by placing primary emphasis upon the former in the legislative branch of government and upon the latter in the administrative branch.

We pass now to the question at hand: What can be done to insure greater efficiency in the legislative branch of govern-



ment? Greater efficiency here calls (1) for services supplying factual and technical knowledge, (2) for leadership in presenting specific proposals for consideration, and (3) for opportunities for adequate discussion.

Services for the supplying of factual and technical knowledge are a first essential. It is important that as far as possible governmental decisions and action be based upon established fact and scientific principles. When an important legislative program is undertaken, the probabilities of achieving desired results depend in large part upon the accuracy of the basic assumptions underlying decisions arrived at. If decisions are based upon guesses or misleading information the outcome will be a matter of chance. Planning agencies have already been mentioned as valuable for supplying necessary data and information. But there is need of assistance in obtaining other facts which bear upon pending questions and for technical assistance in drafting and compiling legislation. Much of this work may be done by qualified persons in the administrative branch of government, but legislators should also have at their service a staff of qualified research workers who are directly accountable to the legislative body.<sup>1</sup> Democracy, it is true, requires that final decision on matters of policy shall be made by laymen; but the services of technically qualified advisers make it possible for laymen to base their decisions upon more accurate information and thus to be more certain of the results of their decisions.

Closely associated with technical assistance is leadership in the selection of proposals for legislative consideration. Large assemblies are incapable of considering programs of policy unless specific proposals are put before them, and the selection of such proposals is difficult unless someone in a position of recognized leadership stands ready to sponsor and support a rather definite set of measures. This leadership may function behind

<sup>1</sup>The value of technical experience was recently demonstrated in one of our state legislatures. When a state school-aid bill was considered without the assistance of a research staff, extensive debate followed over the question of whether the program would cost four million dollars or ten million dollars per year. Later, after a research staff had prepared a scientific estimate of probable costs, a state-aid plan was adopted after very little debate. Laymen were qualified to decide upon the policy when the vital question of fact had been answered.

the scenes—in hotel rooms and in legislative lobbies and offices—or it may be furnished openly by the chief executive and therefore be more easily observed. Under the cabinet system of Great Britain all important matters considered by Parliament are proposed by the cabinet; but in the United States our system of separation of powers prevents direct legislative leadership by the chief executive. It can be argued that our government would prove more efficient if the executive did exercise leadership in legislation; this would not necessarily mean executive domination, for a large legislative assembly is capable of exercising its power to approve, to reject, or to amend specific proposals submitted by the executive. Our history reveals that whenever executive leadership has been repudiated for partisan or other reasons, Congress has accomplished little in the way of creative work.

Finally, the opportunity for free discussion is the essence of representative government. Rules or other devices which serve only to suppress discussion should be eliminated. But, on the other hand, the right to free discussion should not be used by small minorities solely for the purpose of delaying or preventing action.

### **Organization for efficiency in administration**

Observers of the workings of the administrative branches of our government have long been aware of the desirability of reorganization as a means of obtaining greater efficiency. Our American constitutional system, with its separation of powers, was designed in recognition of the value of a certain amount of disagreement and compromise; but, while the functions of government have become more burdensome and the need of coordinated action more urgent, the tendency during the last century has been to promote greater disunity in government by creating numerous independent and semi-independent administrative agencies. In our state and local governments this tendency was marked by the creation of many elective offices; in the national government the creation of numerous, and relatively small, semi-independent agencies has promoted disunity within the administration.

The administration of public policy, like the determination of legislative policy, must be kept within the scope of popular control; but the nature of the task is not the same in the two cases, and different principles of organization and procedure are involved. Administration corresponds, in a sense, to the conduct of battle in accordance with a prescribed plan of attack. Military experts tell us that staff officers are encouraged to express their own opinions freely while plans of battle are in preparation; but once a plan of attack has been decided upon, each officer is required, whether or not he approves of that plan, to give every effort to carrying it out. Peacetime administration is not so urgent as that; but the principles are much the same, and, therefore, administrative organization may be built around authoritarian principles similar to those of a business organization. Every person who is made responsible for the performance of a task of government must have authority sufficient to balance his responsibility; and in order to prevent confusion and conflict within the administration we should set up a clearly defined line of authority and communication from the ultimate popular control down to the performance of each individual task.

Many attempts have been made to reorganize the administrative branches of our national and state governments, and in all cases the object has been to promote efficient and economical performance of tasks which the representatives of the people have decided shall be performed. Several of the plans have not obtained legislative approval, and a few have suffered from a failure of legislatures to appreciate the seriousness of the problems involved; but several states and cities point with satisfaction to the savings made possible by administrative reorganization.

### Judicial procedure

In the judicial and semi-judicial agencies of government, justice to the individual is regarded as a major objective, but efficiency and promptness of action are essential there also. The multiplicity of courts together with rigid regulations regarding jurisdiction, the loss of time caused by controversies



over points of technical procedure, and the common practice of granting retrials, not only result in a waste of judicial power, but also tend to encourage interference with the functions of the other branches of government.<sup>1</sup> We do not need to look far to find cases where the time of an industrious prosecuting attorney is consumed by a single criminal trial because of appeals and rehearings which continue for years, where cities which have sought to prescribe lower rates for local utilities are engaged for years in litigation before public utilities commissions and courts without final decisions, or where the program of an agency of the national government is delayed for months by suits which are filed and later delayed, withdrawn and transferred, or reinstituted in other courts, instead of being allowed to follow the ordinary course of appeal.<sup>2</sup>

At times we are prone to direct our criticism against those special interests which seek to take advantage of the lumbering judicial process to interfere with the performance of governmental functions. But a person whose life is at stake cannot be criticized for seeking delay, nor can one who is seeking to protect large financial interests. Attention should rather be directed toward the courts themselves, for any plan to correct the evil must seek to improve the judicial procedure. Evidence that such improvement is possible can be found in the operation of the British judicial system. Years ago British officials were able to say of their courts that the time had passed when essential justice was denied by reason of technical errors in procedure. But thus far we do not permit our judges as much freedom from rigid application of technical rules as do the British, and this fact seems to be one important reason for numerous appeals and retrials.

### AUTHORITY AND LIBERTY

The attempt has been made in the preceding section to indicate the character of some of the organizational changes neces-

<sup>1</sup>*Journal of the American Judicature Society*, Vol. 20, pp. 176-187 and 223-236.

<sup>2</sup>See *Congressional Record*, Vol. 81, pp. 589-590 and p. 669 (Jan. 27 and Jan. 29, 1937).

sary to increase the functional efficiency of government within the existing framework of the constitution. Moreover, it has been pointed out that the nature of the social and economic problems which government must solve requires an increase in governmental authority in fields hitherto invaded by government to a more limited extent, or not at all. At this point we must face the third fundamental principle of democracy presented earlier in this discussion, namely, that each individual should be allowed as much freedom as possible within the limits of the general welfare. Many defenders of democracy contend that in order to maintain individual liberties, rigid limitations must be placed upon the powers of government. Is the principle of liberty in democracy incompatible with that degree of governmental authority necessary to cope with existing problems? Before attempting an answer to this question let us consider the nature of authority and of liberty and the relation of one to the other.

#### **The nature of authority and liberty in the state**

Broadly speaking, authority is the recognized power of a person, either individually or in conjunction with others, to command the affairs of other persons. The authority may vary in degree from the small part which an individual voter plays in directing the affairs of a democratic state to the extensive powers of a dictator. Authority is independent when others may not question the right to its exercise within prescribed limits; it is subordinate and delegated when the person entrusted with its exercise is accountable to a higher authority.

The reader should realize at this point that authority is not incompatible with popular government. In fact, its existence is the very foundation of democracy.<sup>1</sup> What is required is, first, that final and supreme authority shall rest with the people, and second, that all other authority shall be subordinate to, and controlled, directly or indirectly, by the people. The maintenance of a solid chain of accountability, not an absence of authority, is the essential feature to democracy.

Let us now turn to liberty. From the point of view of the

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 694 f.

individual, liberty is the sphere of activity within which he may do as he pleases and within which the authority of others shall not be held over him. But what shall be the extent of that liberty? If authority is essential to democracy, individual liberties must be restricted; but how much?

In our attempt to determine the proper limits of liberty, we may safely start with the premise that in a democracy liberty is to be sought wherever compatible with the liberty of others. Life is more than existence. If a person is to live in the true social sense, he must have the opportunity to exercise his intellectual and physical powers; and to do so he must be free to err or he will not be free to accomplish. In an earlier chapter we have pointed out the value of individual liberty to a democratic government. We may therefore conclude that every restriction upon the liberties of an individual must be clearly justified. And in a democracy the justification arises out of the ideal objective of granting to each and every individual the greatest possible amount of liberty.

We cannot conceive of an absolute equality of liberty among individuals. Equality of liberty has never existed and probably never can exist. Intellectual and physical powers, as well as the desire to exercise them, vary greatly from person to person. We should be particularly anxious to protect the liberties of the exceptional person, because he is the one whose experiences will be of greatest value to society. All organized activity requires leadership. By granting opportunities to display individual capacity to invent new methods or to lead others, we may better determine who shall be allowed to direct our organized activities in a democratic society. Therefore, the sphere of liberty must be broad enough, not only to satisfy the average person, but to encourage the exceptional persons to exercise their powers for the benefit of society.

But we cannot presume that the exceptional individual would be justified in exercising his liberties in a manner which would impair unduly the liberties of others. Moreover, when one person, in the exercise of his liberties, is permitted to direct the affairs of others, he is exercising authority, and in a democracy he should be made accountable to a higher authority—ulti-



mately to the people of the jurisdiction within which his authority is exercised. We have defined liberty as a sphere of activity within which the individual is given freedom without accountability. It follows that liberty becomes irresponsible authority if its possessor uses it to place others at his mercy. And what is more incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy than irresponsible authority?

If this analysis is correct, then liberty in a democracy cannot mean the greatest possible amount of freedom for any one individual—whether he be a government official, a captain of industry, a labor leader, or a landowner. What we seek to maintain is the greatest possible amount of liberty for all individuals. This, of necessity, means a substantial equality of liberty, for there is a point at which an increase in the liberties of one will be counter-balanced by a decrease in the liberties of another or of others.

If, then, liberty in a democracy means the greatest possible freedom for all, there can be no conflict between liberty and authority, so long as the latter is accountable. In fact, this liberty is preserved by the exercise of authority, and could not exist without authority. It is irresponsible authority that is incompatible with liberty, and for that reason liberty must itself be limited in order to be preserved.

### **Liberty in its social setting**

The status of liberty is necessarily related to the social and economic organization of a society existing in a given period. In an agricultural society where each man owned a small farm or a small shop and where he had elbow-room to exercise his own powers without interfering with others, it was not necessary to place many restrictions upon the individual in order to maintain a relative equality of liberty. The fact that each worker owned his own tools, and perhaps his own little shop, made him independent of others, but at the same time gave him little chance to control the affairs of others. The frontier farmer with his family was largely self-sustaining, and he needed little more than an assurance that his government would leave him to his own. Even today the farmer is al-

lowed to exercise considerable freedom in such matters as the construction of new buildings and the disposal of wastes, because negligence on his part is unlikely to endanger the lives or health of many others.

In a machine-using democracy, on the other hand, the sphere of activity within which one person may move without interfering with the activities of his fellow men is necessarily smaller. The urban life which is associated with modern industry requires rigid rules for the protection of the lives and the health of the community. In the economic field specialization in modern society makes people highly interdependent, and the fact that almost all major enterprises are collective in their nature makes it impossible for one person to disregard the interests and activities of those about him. For instance, the refusal of a few persons to do the work necessary to supply a large city with water could result, within a few hours, in conflagration, panic, and untold sufferings from disease and death. Therefore, it is inevitable that if liberty (in the sense of liberty for the many) is to be preserved, many restrictions must be placed upon the individual. The individual liberties which we had a century ago are impossible today, for if one were subject to no more restrictions than those logically imposed in an eighteenth-century agricultural society, others would be deprived of liberty to the extent of becoming little better than slaves.

#### **The need of regulation in the economic field**

The danger of irresponsible authority does not arise out of the activities of public officials alone. The owners or managers of large industrial corporations and public utilities, the leaders of labor unions, the managers of financial institutions, the owners of land, and others, may, through the exercise of their liberties, impose their authority unduly upon their employees, upon their tenants, upon members of their organizations, or upon consumers of their goods or services.

In the economic field, with its complex organization and its need of leadership, there is always danger that the liberties of one may infringe upon the liberty of another. This is the

field in which irresponsible authority is most likely to arise in a modern political democracy. We are therefore faced with the problem of using political authority to regulate economic authority, but, at the same time, of avoiding undue restrictions upon the individual.

There are three general methods whereby government may seek to prevent the rise of irresponsible economic authority. First, it may attempt to restore the automatic controls which exist in a state of free competition, by requiring large industries to disintegrate, and by preventing "combinations in restraint of trade." Secondly, it may prescribe strict regulations in regard to prices, wages, hours, and conditions of employment, and methods of producing, advertising, and selling commodities; it may even limit the right to discharge employees. A third general method is to hold those who exercise economic authority accountable for their acts, either to the collective will of those over whom the authority is exercised, or to the will of the community as a whole. This method may be represented by government ownership in a democracy, or it may involve coöperative ownership and control by workers or consumers.

We need not be concerned here about the relative merits of these three methods of controlling economic authority—though the question is the center of much controversy in America and elsewhere. The method to be followed, or the extent to which the authority shall be exercised, will be answered in a given case by the nature and the seriousness of the economic or social situation created by the exercise of irresponsible authority. But our democratic government must act when the fundamentals of liberty are being undermined. When a business corporation becomes so powerful that thousands of people are placed at the mercy of its leaders, that corporation becomes invested with a public interest; and if government is to remain the supreme authority in the state, it must maintain control over matters of public interest.

No state, whether democratic or dictatorial, can afford to allow a few persons (except the leaders in dictatorships) to gain so much power that they are able to challenge effectively



the power of the state to perform its functions.<sup>1</sup> Just as kings were compelled to suppress the private armies of the great barons in order to secure for the people the advantages of the national state, so are modern democratic governments compelled to see that no group of industrial leaders, financiers, or labor leaders possess enough power to defeat the efforts of political authorities. Government needs to maintain close supervision of all services which are used to maintain authority; and, in a democracy, it must forestall the possible concentration of power of any kind in the hands of a few persons. Furthermore, the maintenance of the democracy requires that the government prevent other types of authority from impairing those individual liberties which are essential to the continued popular control of government and to the welfare of the state.

### **The question of civil liberties**

Thus far in the consideration of liberty and authority, emphasis has been placed upon the need of imposing restrictions upon some in order to preserve the liberties of others. But there is a category of individual liberties in which the exercise of freedom by one person is unlikely to impair the justifiable liberties of others. This category involves the right to express one's opinions freely, a right considered so vital to the maintenance of democracy that it is safeguarded by specific provisions in our national and state constitutions.

If, as we have suggested above, it is the business of a state's governing authorities to satisfy the wants of the governed, it becomes obvious that the authorities should be informed of those wants. It becomes obvious, also, that wants cannot be made known unless the governed are free to express their opinions. A legislative body would be in no position to legislate intelligently on tariffs, for instance, if all opinions on the subject were suppressed except the opinions of those who manufacture products in competition with foreign imports. And the same principle applies even when the views suppressed

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<sup>1</sup>To challenge in the courts is to seek redress from one of the arms of the government itself, and therefore is not a challenge to the power of the state.

are those of persons who believe that there can be no political democracy without a more equitable distribution of property and that the latter can be accomplished only by change in our political and economic systems.<sup>1</sup> Suppression does not change these opinions. Instead, it may tend to convince people whose opinions are suppressed that the present order is corrupt and that revolution is the only practical method of effecting a change. Furthermore, we should remember that all progress in new directions has its beginning in the minds and experiences of a very small minority. The majority are wedded inflexibly to standardized opinion, and tend to consider all ideas bad which conflict with the present order. Therefore, although very few people desire to express opinions completely at odds with the traditional ideas of the community, the way should be open so that the thinking few with courage really have the opportunity to assist in the building of a better society. And this conclusion holds true though we insist that most of the dissenters have ideas which seem foolish and fantastic.

Freedom of speech has little value except when accompanied by freedom of peaceful assembly, because group discussion is essential in order that dissenters may make their views generally known. Even though we disagree sharply with new ideas, should we suppress them? If ideas are bad, they should be refuted in open discussion. If we cannot answer the arguments, are we justified in calling the ideas bad? The denial of free expression—which includes the freedom of peaceful assembly—too often means the preservation of some existing special interests which cannot maintain themselves in the face of open discussion. That is why dictatorial governments dare not allow free discussion of political questions. Arbitrary powers would not be secure in a situation other than one of comparative political ignorance.

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<sup>1</sup>According to a speech made in Congress by a representative who favored continuation of the committee to investigate un-American activities, "It is not un-American for those who disagree with constitutional government to say so openly. It is not un-American for them to advocate peaceful change of government." But secret conspiracy to overthrow government by force or by interference with orderly processes is un-American, he contended. *Congressional Record*, Vol. 84, p. 1731 (Feb. 7, 1939, daily edition).

In America the courts serve as legal guardians of free speech and free press. Provisions of our national and state constitutions providing that no laws shall be passed "abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press" are subject to enforcement by judicial processes. In recent years our higher courts, and especially the federal courts, have been jealous guardians of these freedoms. We have seen laws to suppress publication of newspapers which published "libelous matter" declared invalid by the United States Supreme Court; and recently, a federal court issued an injunction ordering officials of one of our larger cities to cease the practices by which, for several years, socialists, labor organizers, and even some moderate liberals, have been prevented from speaking before public gatherings in that city.

But theoretical rights cannot be maintained if public sentiment favors, or is indifferent to, their suppression. There are many ways of suppressing free speech which cannot be effectively challenged by use of the courts. In the first place, constitutional guarantees subject to enforcement by judicial process apply only when governmental agencies seek to suppress freedom. Violence or threat of violence has been resorted to to exclude "undesirable" speakers from cities or other gatherings; halls, both public and private, have been barred against the "nonconformists"; and various forms of indirect attack have been used to prevent free expression. Persons who depend for their living upon wages or salaries may be suppressed by a threatened loss of their incomes; and debtors may at times be forced into silence by threats of foreclosure. Against such attacks upon free expression there is little or no protection through the use of the courts.

What then, we may ask, is the value of advocating any guarantee of free expression? Is it not useless to advocate a right which can be suppressed by so many methods? The answer is that a strong sentiment in favor of this right—even though advocated by an active minority only—will do much to preserve freedom. Perfection may not be attained; but private powers, as well as public authorities, give heed to a consistent demand for the preservation of civil liberties. On



the other hand, if the violations of the right to free expression pass unchallenged in the extreme cases, the danger is—as shown today in some localities of the United States—that the grip of power will slowly be tightened until even the advocates of moderate reforms find themselves suppressed and persecuted. Should such a situation arise in the United States our democratic institutions would indeed be in danger.

### OBLIGATIONS OF CITIZENS

In conclusion, let us remember that government is the only general agency designed to protect the welfare of mankind and to direct the progress of society. Government is not all powerful, nor can it wander far afield in its activities from the traditional ways of the society in which it functions. But it is the most powerful organized agency with supervision of practically the entire field of social activity in the community. If government is controlled by a few for the fulfillment of their own selfish interests, it cannot serve the ends for which it should exist. If, on the other hand, it is managed for the betterment of society as a whole, government is serving a worthy purpose.

In view of the many complex problems of modern society and the dangers which democracy is now facing, we must call upon all the intelligence and integrity that the community can marshal. But, you may ask, what can the individual citizen do to help protect the basic essentials of democracy and to promote the success of his government in preserving the general welfare? The answer is that no system of government can be maintained solely by written regulations or even by a few leaders interested in enforcing those regulations. A strong public sentiment is the first essential to the preservation of freedom and the maintenance of responsible authority; an apathetic public, on the other hand, fosters suppression as well as political inefficiency in a democracy. Although perfection may not be attained, neither public officials nor private powers will get far out of line with a positive and clearly expressed public opinion. The maintenance of an active interest and

an enlightened opinion among the citizens, therefore, becomes a primary essential of popular government.

It is particularly important that those persons who, because of their experience, training, or native ability, are more able than others to understand the problems, should take an active interest in public affairs. If they do not serve directly as public officials or employees, they ought to be ready to co-operate with the authorities by giving advice and information or by criticism of a constructive type when that is deemed necessary. They should seek to aid in marshaling the forces of education and information in the search for a unity of purpose and a goal toward which our democratic society may desire to move. The college graduate, especially, should feel it his duty to participate directly or indirectly in the improvement of government—not to sit back and be amused at political corruption or at the ways in which the masses are misled, but rather to combat the irresponsible power of special-interest groups, whether political or economic, whose activities are a menace to democracy.

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY

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IN PRECEDING CHAPTERS attention has centered upon the characteristics of political institutions, their functions, their methods of maintaining order, and the problems that arise out of the necessity of adjusting them to the changing demands of the society they serve. All of these features have been presented as essentially domestic matters, local or national. Obviously these features represent only one side of the picture, for neither our own nor other nations live an isolated life on the globe. The nation is only one in an earth-wide association of nations. Hence, political institutions are compelled to project some of their activities beyond national boundaries into the field of international politics. During the modern period, particularly since the beginning of the nineteenth century, international politics have become involved in problems of grave importance to national well-being and to the well-being of the whole world society. This and the following two chapters are designed to present some international aspects of modern political life: (1) the character and development of international relations, (2) the problems that arise from them, and (3) international agencies and institutions that have been established in the effort to bring about a more secure and orderly international society.

Before we pass to a discussion of international politics it

will be desirable to clear up a possible confusion of terms. Attention has already been drawn to the common and rather loose use of the terms "nation" and "national" when the state is really the subject in mind. Such an inaccurate usage prevails in the field of external politics. When the term "international relations" is used, it is "interstate relations" that is really meant, for it is the state which maintains contact and intercourse with other states. There are "nations" which have no political external relations because they are not "states"; and there have been "states" which had external political relations, but which were not "nations"; the city-states of Greece and of Italy are illustrations in point. Consequently, it will be understood in this discussion that when the terms "nation," "national," and "international" are used, it is the political society known as the state which is in mind. For the American student this usage has added convenience—it distinguishes our interstate relations within the American Union from the relations of the United States with foreign states.

#### **How international relations arise**

International relations result from the contact and intercourse of states. The extent of the contact, and consequently the extent of international relations, depends primarily upon the methods of communication. When, for example, ships were really small boats dependent on wind and tide for their movement, there was very little regular contact between the peoples of states separated by large bodies of water. Similarly, when movement was restricted to camel, donkey, and horse, there was little regular contact over land frontiers.

The conditions here suggested obviously refer to an early state of society. The situation today is strikingly different, with our almost instantaneous communication of ideas and events and our rapid transportation of people and goods. With these changes international relations have become of primary importance to the peoples of the world. Large numbers of ships of various nations passing one another on the high seas now make it necessary that their status be established

by agreement among the states, so that controversies over policing the seas, over collisions, or over questions of salvage may be averted. The treatment accorded vessels of one state while in the ports or territorial waters of another state may also give rise to international questions. When one state interests itself in the conditions under which its nationals or national companies can do business in the territories of another state, international relations are involved. Rapid transportation has enabled people to move about more freely, and it has facilitated exchanges of goods and services of various kinds beyond national frontiers. Out of these activities arise questions of the admission of aliens into the national territory and of the treatment of aliens who have been admitted. The state itself or its citizens may acquire properties lying within another state and may thus raise important questions concerning rights of action against these properties or concerning rights of use. Provisions of national law, such as tariff laws, may be felt to inflict injury on the nationals of another state and, through them, on the state itself. This situation may lead to discussions between the two governments, and possibly to the embittering of relations through retaliation. Many questions of international relations result from activity of the government of the state in behalf of its nationals whose interests are extended beyond the frontiers of the state. Thus it may be said that international relations grow out of the activities of individuals and groups owing allegiance to the state when those activities involve relationships either under the laws of another state or with individuals or groups in another state.

International relations may also grow out of state policies commonly regarded as purely domestic policies; that is, domestic policies may have international consequences. Tariff policies may be such. The type of tariff measure which is usually called protective may affect international relations. It is enacted to promote the interests of those who are producing for the domestic market, and is therefore thought of apart from international relations. It is designed to make the state stronger and more secure by protecting the domestic



producer from too severe a foreign competition. It may also have the purpose of fostering domestic production of certain types of goods to the end that the state may not be dependent on foreign sources of supply, but rather shall be able to supply its own needs in the event that it is cut off from the foreign supply by war or by adverse policies pursued by other states. Such measures would seem to be domestic and thus of sole concern to the one state. But other states will be found following, independently, substantially the same policy; or, as has been suggested, they may initiate such a policy in retaliation against a state that has inflicted injury upon their exporters. Retaliation of this kind may injure the exporters of the offending protectionist state and lead it to seek, through negotiations or otherwise, a modification of the protective policy of the other nation.

It appears from this brief consideration of the numerous sources of international relations that many cases arise out of the activities of the nationals of a state—activities that affect the interests of a second state or affect the interests of the nationals of a second state. In addition to these cases are international relations that result from political and economic policies and activities of one state that relate to or affect the interests of another state. Constant exchanges of opinion concerning policies followed in the economic sphere, or where frontier relations are involved, or where power relations involving armament and its uses are in question, make up a considerable body of international relations in contemporary society.

Troublesome international questions sometimes grow out of still another type of state policy which appears at first sight to be strictly domestic in character. The naval and military policy of a state is ordinarily regarded as a question of national concern only. But it, like a high tariff policy, may have important international consequences. The state maintains an army, a navy, and an air force for protective purposes; but the size of its forces and their equipment are somewhat determined by the defense preparations made by other states. In the opening years of the twentieth century when Germany

proclaimed her right to build a navy proportionate to her national needs of defense, she became involved in long, bitter negotiations with Great Britain, who began to fear for her own safety. If a state has agreed to certain limitations, the pursuit of an independent policy thereafter may influence the action of other states. Thus when it was reported that Japan was planning to build warships of more than 35,000 tons, a size to which England, France, and the United States had restricted themselves by agreement, inquiries were immediately addressed by those three states to Japan to find out what its plans were. It was stated that if Japan built the larger tonnage vessel the other states would probably do the same. In other words, the naval and military policies of one state help to define, on a competitive basis, those of the others, and in the process give rise to and affect international relations.

Military policy, likewise, is determined by the general policies of the state and by those of other states. Japanese expansion on the continent of Asia, the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, German aims and aspirations with respect to Austria and Czechoslovakia, German and Italian support of the Spanish insurgents—all helped to determine the British policy of rearmament after 1936, and French policies in general.

#### **State organization of the foreign service**

These international relations of the state are supervised and directed through diplomacy. For present purposes, diplomacy may be defined as the art of conducting international negotiations. As part of its structure of government every state maintains a department of foreign affairs. In the United States this department is called the Department of State. In most other countries it is called the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Presiding over this department is an official designated as the secretary of state, or as the minister of foreign affairs. He is a most important member of the cabinet and consequently is selected as much because of his political views as on account of his knowledge of or experience with international relations. As a political officer his fortunes are bound up with those of the other members of the executive branch

of the government. Immediately under him are several undersecretaries and assistant secretaries. At this point the technically trained and relatively permanent foreign-office staff begins.

The department is subdivided along both geographical and functional lines. Thus in the American Department of State there are divisions for Western-European, Eastern-European, Mexican, Latin-American, Far-Eastern, and Near-Eastern Affairs, each under a chief of division. Several of these may be grouped together under the supervision of an assistant secretary. Then there are a number of functional divisions, such as the consular division and that concerned with passports and visas; also certain functional offices, such as that of the economic adviser. Thus each state maintains a fairly elaborate organization and a large staff at the national capital to carry on its relations with other states.

Furthermore, each state maintains at the national capital of every other state a permanent representation, and in turn receives at its seat of government representatives from other states. In the more important states it maintains an *embassy*, presided over by an ambassador. Elsewhere its diplomatic establishment is called a *legation*, headed by a minister. The staff of each consists of a counselor, and a number of secretaries, in addition to the clerical staff. Then there may be attached to the embassy or legation military, naval, and commercial attachés, who perform informational and other services for the corresponding departments of the home government.

The diplomatic service exists as the principal channel of communication between the governments of the two states. The line of communication extends from the foreign minister, through the subordinates of the home department, to the ambassador or minister of the home government residing in a foreign state, then through him to the minister of foreign affairs of the foreign state, and through him to the head of that state. Similarly, information concerning the views of the foreign government and also concerning developments and opinion in the foreign state is transmitted to the home government through this same channel, but in the reverse direc-



tion. Moreover, negotiations leading to treaty agreements between the two states are conducted through these agencies.<sup>1</sup> Aside from the duties just noted, the diplomat has important work to do from day to day in seeing to it that the rights of his state and its nationals are respected and that all of the necessary steps are taken to promote the interests of his state in the other country. This part of his work, properly carried on, has given rise to another definition of diplomacy as the application of tact and intelligence to the conduct of international relations.

Another branch of the foreign service of the state is the *consular service*. The government of each state maintains consular officers at the important ports and centers of business of the other states. These officers are not directly concerned with the transaction of interstate business. The consul's work is more immediately concerned with the interests of nationals of his country who may be carrying on activities in that part of the foreign state lying within his jurisdiction. He certifies the invoices of cargoes of vessels sailing under his nation's flag, handles disputes between master and crew, and supervises the application of national law in relation to the internal economy of those vessels. He also collects and transmits information about trade opportunities; and, in the case of a United States consul, he helps to carry out our immigration laws. Thus the consular officer performs a variety of work of a commercial and legal character that is of importance to the nationals of his country.

This system of permanent diplomatic and consular representation has been growing to its present form since the Renaissance. Thus it is somewhat older than the existing states system which assumed substantially its present form after 1648, dating its origin from the Peace of Westphalia at the end of the Thirty Years' War. International relations, in the sense of intercommunity relations, however, obviously go back further than historical records.

<sup>1</sup>A very important basis for international relations is laid in treaties. It is because of the importance of treaties and the fact that they were earlier called *diplomas* that high international agents are called "diplomats" or "diplomatists," and the art of conducting international relations is called "diplomacy."

## INTERCOMMUNITY AND INTERSTATE RELATIONS BEFORE MODERN TIMES

The peaceful contacts of trade and the hostile contacts of war probably began as soon as a community ceased absolutely to live unto itself. Thus the earliest political societies of which we have record had probably come into existence as a result of the amalgamation of smaller groups through contact, mainly in the form of war and conquest.

### The ancient Near East

In earlier chapters in this book dealing with the societies of the ancient Near East attention was called to the contacts and interrelations existing among Egyptian communities preliminary to consolidation and the establishment of the Egyptian kingdom. It was pointed out that there was a constant tendency toward wars of conquest, and the extension of the city-state into an empire. But antecedent to wars of conquest was the development of commerce and the consequent perception of material advantages to be won through war.

As commerce developed the ancient societies entered into treaties, sent embassies, and regulated their commercial and political relations under a rudimentary system of law. Alliances were formed between states sometimes as a means of avoiding war but frequently to ensure success in the event of war. Forms were evolved for declaration of war. Certain practices during war, such, for instance, as the poisoning of wells, were proscribed, and thus war itself was brought under a limited measure of regulation. Evidence of the warlike character of international relations among the peoples of the ancient Near East may be found in Old Testament history as well as in the reconstructions which are now being made of the early history of the entire Mediterranean basin. But, at the same time, it is being revealed that there was more pacific commercial activity among the early communities than was formerly suspected.

### The ancient Greeks

Within the Greek world we have an even clearer picture of intercity relationships comparable in some respects to the system of international relations of modern times. It is not necessary to recapitulate here the description which has already been given of the Greek city-states as political communities, or to do more than introduce a reminder of the distinction made between the members of the Greek societies and the non-Greek world. The wars of the Greeks against the Persians reveal the existence of international relations of a sort between the Greek cities and this non-Greek world. These wars, and the intermittent threat of attack from the outside, not only stimulated and perpetuated a consciousness of cultural unity among the Greeks, in spite of their disunity, but they also drew them together from time to time into alliances for common defense which occasionally evolved into relatively permanent leagues.

The formation of leagues for defense against external enemies indicates that there were political relations among the Greek cities as well as between the Greek and the non-Greek world. These existed even when no external threat to their independence was presented. Frequently they took the form of hostile contacts, since there was a struggle for ascendancy within the Greek world. Consequently there were alliances made between Greek city-states to strengthen themselves for defense against attack from other cities, or combinations of them. And, just as modern alliances at times have other purposes than those of defense, so these alliances were sometimes formed for purposes of conquest. The alliances sometimes took the form of leagues or confederations—such as the Delian League—intended to provide a basis for peaceful relationship among the members. Invariably the leagues broke down because of the attempt of one of the members to establish its supremacy over the others. In the case of the Delian League, Athens was the offender. The periodic attempts of one city-state to dominate the others made it impossible for the Greeks to find a stable organization of inde-



pendent political societies. The failure to find a basis of unity, either through permanent confederation or through imperial organization, finally led to the control of the Greek cities from the outside.

They did, however, find a measure of regulation of their common concerns on the basis of a sort of law, and through the acceptance of customary practices. Thus they developed a regulated system of intercommunication through diplomatic missions sent as occasion demanded from one city to another. Forms for the declaration and for the termination of war were established, and the conduct of war itself was brought under a measure of regulation; practices of arbitration, under prescribed conditions, were developed; a definite status for aliens, determining their rights and obligations, was recognized, along with rights of asylum or protection at designated places. Treaties were entered into for the regulation of commerce and other peaceful contacts. And when the Greek cities established colonies, relations between the mother city and its colonies were carried on under clearly defined conditions.

Greek thought also reflects the importance of the interrelations of ancient societies. Plato and Aristotle, in their philosophical examination of the state, had to take into account the fact that the problem of maintaining the state, and desirable conditions within it, was complicated by the existence of other states. Of greater historical importance were the theories of the Stoics, which, it will be recalled, were developed as a result in part of the fundamental political changes following the conquests of Alexander. Subordination of the Greek city-states in a world empire containing a medley of Greek and Near Eastern peoples inevitably produced a different philosophy of international relations, in addition to a modifying influence on the conceptions of the state. In response to the changed situation the Stoics brought forward a political philosophy resting on a cosmopolitanism that was lacking in earlier Greek thought. It represented a shift in theoretical emphasis away from the independent city-state, and it helped to establish a theoretical basis for conceptions later embodied in natural law as it was developed in the Roman legal system where

it admirably served the needs of the Roman world empire. This aspect of history will be considered in the following brief examination of the Roman world.

### The Roman world

Rome, it will be recalled, also began as a city-state. As such it had the same sort of relations with other cities as those characteristic of the Greek world. War, the most primitive form of contact with other societies, was recurrent, and was waged under rules governing its declaration, conduct, and termination. In preparation for war and in settling peace terms Rome followed a practice of making alliances, which indicates an understanding of the treaty relationship. "Among the offenses which were regarded as justifying war were the violation of a treaty, the desertion or ill-treatment of an ally, refusal to receive embassies or failure to observe the sanctity of ambassadors, rendering aid to an enemy, infringement of territorial rights, desecration of sacred places, and refusal to give up a person or persons guilty of serious offenses."<sup>1</sup>

The basis of these rules recognized by Rome was somewhat different from that observed in the practices of the Greek city-states. In the case of Rome the rules rested on Roman law which defined the basis of relationships between Rome and other states. With the Greeks, they rested on explicit or tacit agreements between independent political societies. The sanction for the rules recognized by Rome, that is, the power of compulsion back of them, was the power of Rome; with the Greeks that sanction was derived from appeals to the gods. Later, with the development of the Roman Empire, the concept of national communities with rights of political independence was abandoned. Important political relations between the constituent parts of the Empire were controlled by the imperial state, and the Roman peace became a source of imperial pride. Thus with the universalism of Rome we are confronted with the organization of a Western imperial so-

<sup>1</sup>Frank M. Russell, *Theories of International Relations* (The D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936), p. 77. Citing Phillipson, *International Law of Greece and Rome* (The Macmillan Company, 1911), Vol. II, p. 182.

ciety rather than with the organization of a system of international relations based upon the existence of independent states.

Despite this fact the Roman Empire has great significance for students of international relations. The powerful influence of the Roman conception of political unity has been considered elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Here we are concerned with the importance of Roman law as it has affected international relations and practices in modern times.

The development of law during the period of the Roman Empire was directly influenced by practical problems of government arising out of the character of the Empire itself. The Empire, as we have seen, was an empire of city-states, city-states which were granted a considerable degree of local autonomy. Hence there arose a need for creating some kind of legal system to regulate the relations of the members of one community with members of another. The need became the more pressing because, under the Roman peace, there was a great increase in the movement of peoples and a marked expansion of trade. The Roman citizen carried the Roman law with him throughout the Empire, so that movement on his part did not create legal problems. But the movement of those who did not enjoy the privileges of Roman citizenship did create legal problems whenever they found themselves outside the limits where local law was operative. It was this situation that led to the creation of the office of *Praeter Peregrinus*,<sup>2</sup> and, through him, to the development of the special branch of Roman law known as the *ius gentium*, or the law of nations. For present purposes it is this "law of nations" that has particular interest.

The legal adjustment of relations among those, not Roman citizens, who came from parts of the Empire where different legal systems existed required that principles of general application be developed and applied. In consequence, the *ius gentium* came to embody the elements common to a variety of local legal systems which could be applied in the settlement

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 633 f.

<sup>2</sup>See pp. 251 f.



of disputes. Beyond this, the *ius gentium* represented an application of the Stoics' conception of natural law, for what the Stoics accepted as natural and reasonable was now presented in the Roman courts as a just basis for decisions. Thus it contained two elements: (1) law common to several communities and (2) natural law. The conception of law as given by Cicero does not differ from the position taken much later by jurists who proposed to apply the principles of natural law to the relations of modern states. "True law," Cicero said, "is right reason conformable to nature, universal, unchangeable, eternal, whose commands urge us to duty, and whose prohibitions restrain us from evil. . . . This law cannot be contracted by any other law. . . . It is not one thing at Rome and another thing at Athens."<sup>1</sup> Thus it was held among the Romans, as later, that there are general principles of relationship which can be deduced by reason, departure from which produces inevitable consequences.

It should be noticed, however, that the *ius gentium*—the law of nations—was not then applied to the relations of independent states. It was useful in supporting the conception that individuals of one community within the Roman world had legal rights to be ascertained and applied in another community where the legal system was different. The "reasonable" rule was clearly a rule applicable to diverse legal systems. It consequently reënforced the development of the *ius gentium*, which, in present terminology, was more nearly a system of private than of public international law. Its principles were, however, by analogy, later carried over into the relations of states and served as a point of reference in the development of the present system of public international law—a law governing the relations of independent states.

### The Middle Ages

The destruction of the Roman Empire brought with it a reorganization of western European society on a new basis. The attempts which were made during the earlier centuries

<sup>1</sup>Cicero, *De Republica*, Vol. 3, p. 22, as translated in Cicero's *Nature of the Gods*, etc., ed. by C. D. Yonge (London, 1878), p. 360.

of the Middle Ages to attain again the imperial unity of Rome were unsuccessful. To be sure, the hierarchical arrangements of feudalism were evolved, and these, for a time, preserved a theoretical unity through the Holy Roman Empire; and, as the embryonic national communities began to develop, the emperor laid claim to a position as arbiter between them. But the closest approximation of unity was attained through the Roman church, which was the Church Universal until the Reformation.<sup>1</sup> It perpetuated, in its organization, the idea of Imperial Rome. It preserved Latin as the common language, so that its priests and prelates, who were the educated people of the times, were able to carry on communication throughout Europe. Public documents, especially treaties, were drawn up in Latin as the common written language of Europe. Ability to use it meant that church officials became the negotiators between princes and other temporal rulers. The Canon, or Church, law became the only law which transcended the limits of the communities into which Europe was divided. When, with the establishment of feudalism, European society entered the age of force and disorder through the complete breakdown of the imperial authority, the Church strove, with some success, to mitigate the horrors of perpetual war. The Pope asserted the right of mediation between rulers whose interests conflicted. This adjustment sometimes took the form of arbitration. Thus it was the Church, rather than the imperial state principle, which served as a unifying and mediating force in medieval society.

But, in the process of achieving this position, the Church became itself a political force, engaging directly in the struggle for temporal power. Thus its ideals came to be compromised. As the national monarchies began to assume form, their interest in a monopoly of power within the state produced conflict with the Church as an active competitor for temporal authority. Ultimately, in spite of its asserted universalism, the Church itself became nationalized in its outlook. But that was only finally accomplished as a result of the long-drawn-out series of wars which marked the Reformation.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 644 ff.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN MODERN CIVILIZATION

With the development of the present states-system we enter the modern age and are in a position to observe the early stages in the evolution of modern international relations. As already mentioned, a convenient beginning point is found in the year 1648, the year of the Peace of Westphalia, which closed the Thirty Years' War. The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) was a long struggle in which the religious hatreds generated by the Protestant Reformation and the Machiavelian ambitions of absolute princes combined to involve all of Europe. The Peace of Westphalia is an important landmark for several reasons. For our purpose, it is important because it marks the birth of the modern states-system.

### Development of the modern states-system

Then, for the first time for many generations, treaties, the Treaties of Westphalia, were negotiated on the basis of the independence and the equality of the signatory states. The event serves to put a period, formally and finally, to the dominance of the universal hierarchical organization of Europe, which had been one of the significant expressions of the medieval system. It also marks the definite exclusion of the papal representatives from participation in the international political affairs of the European world. From this time, both in theory and in practice, Europe and the world came to be compartmented into separate political societies which were gradually forced to develop a system of interstate relationships and to organize for the purpose of carrying on those relations. Thus international relations have come to be conceived as the relations of states which are regarded as independent of one another and which are subject to no external authority. Each state is considered to be completely in control of its own territories, and, within certain limits, of all individuals and groups who come within its territorial jurisdiction, or sphere of authority. Furthermore, each is considered to be equal with every other state both in the making of law and before the law.



But it must not be assumed from what has just been said that the modern states-system came into being in 1648 unheralded by previous developments. The national monarchies, such as those of England and France, had gradually assumed form during the period of the Renaissance. The theory of sovereignty as the essential attribute of the state had already been formulated by Bodin<sup>1</sup> in the sixteenth century, and had been applied by the French monarchs in their struggle to subdue the feudal lords to their own supreme authority. There was also the model presented by the three-century-old city-state system of Italy, which was the European states-system in microcosm; it was the city-state of Venice that started the system of permanent embassies and set the tone of modern diplomacy, and it was a citizen of the city-state of Florence—Machiavelli—who set before the absolute princes of the early modern period the accepted concept of the state.

### The Machiavellian state

Machiavelli pictured the state as a nonmoral entity whose ruler (the Prince) should govern his conduct only by considerations of expediency. Thus the *raison d'état* (reason of state) came to be accepted by the rulers of the absolutist states, and later by more popular governments, as ample justification for following courses of action otherwise completely indefensible. Conquest for purposes of national unification or to strengthen the foundations of the state was preached by Machiavelli and practiced by rulers as both sensible and justified. Thus he became marked as a proponent of nationalism, and of the national dynastic state. He wrote as a "realist," not concerned with the right and wrong of the behavior of governments but with the successful attainment of the ends of the state. As a student and also as a participant in the politics of the times, he formulated, from the practice of the Italian rulers, a system of political behavior which, regardless of ethical considerations, would enable the Prince (the government) to maintain his rule and increase the power of the state. The application of his principles gave rise to a system

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 618 f.

of international relations based on considerations of power.

Furthermore, the conception of state sovereignty itself necessitated a primary emphasis on power in state policy.<sup>1</sup> For sovereignty, in its external form, means independence and freedom of action for the state in its relations with other states. Responsibility rested with the state itself for the maintenance of its independence. Thus it had to concern itself with power to preserve its independence against possible assaults on the part of other states, and to maintain its territorial unity or integrity. Power in international relations is defined first of all in terms of armies and navies, that is, in terms of armament. The desire for armament for purposes of extension of the territories of the state is therefore reënforced and made more defensible because of the need of it for purposes of defense. The purposes of the state in international relations are defined in its foreign policies. Diplomacy is used, in the first instance, to get other states to acquiesce in these purposes, that is, in the policies of the state, when they can be realized only at the expense of other states. If the other states do not give way to the persuasion of the diplomat, then persuasion gives way to coercion. Back of diplomacy, in other words, stands the military power of the state as something to be used to overcome resistance to the realization of its purposes.

This conception of power as an instrument of the state requires emphasis, for it helps to clarify the international relations not only of the absolutist princes of the Old Order in Europe but of the international situation today. All states are equally and simultaneously concerned with putting into effect policies which each state, as sovereign, defines for itself, or of resisting the policies of other states. Therefore, each state becomes concerned with its own power relative to the power of other states with which it has relations, states which are, or may be, antagonistic. Thus each changes its conception of its needs for armament with shifts in the power-position of the others. The result is competition, controlled only by the will of the government of each state, and by its economic ability progressively to increase its military forces.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 621 f.

### The development of international law

But, paralleling the application of these principles in international relations, another development has been in progress, one designed to restrict the operation of the conception of national sovereignty and to establish a basis other than that of power upon which to conduct international relations—a development of principles embodied in international law. As the states-system began to assume its present form, early jurists, most of whom were churchmen, began to search out a basis for the establishment of restraints on states which had been drawn into contact with one another. This was found, in the absence of an established practice, in the branch of the Roman law already referred to, the *ius gentium*, and in the *ius naturale*.

The Roman *ius gentium*, “the law of all the nations,” however, differs from modern international law in a number of important respects. In the first place, it was law laid down by a superior, rather than law agreed to by independent political societies. In the second place, it was law enforced by the power of Rome rather than law resting on the basis of self-enforcement by those who had voluntarily accepted it. And in the third place, it regulated the relations of those individuals who were not Roman citizens, and who were foreigners to the community in which they found themselves; it did not regulate interstate relations. In addition to the principles of the *ius gentium*, which were drawn upon in the attempt to construct our modern system of international law, Rome furnished the modern society of states with the conception of the territorial basis of authority, which contrasted with the personal basis of authority underlying legal and political relationships among the Germanic tribes. By 1648 the Roman conception had prevailed and authority came to be established fundamentally on the territorial basis. The personal relationship, represented by allegiance, however, has been maintained as a modifying principle, especially important in the determination of nationality.

One of the first notable works to draw upon the Roman sources, and other sources too, was that of Hugo Grotius, a



Dutch jurist. In 1625, while the Thirty Years' War was still raging, Grotius published his epoch-making book *On the Law of War and Peace*. Explaining why he wrote the book, he said that he "saw prevailing throughout the Christian world a license in making war of which even barbarous nations would have been ashamed. Recourse was had to arms for slight reasons or no reasons; and when arms were taken up, all reverence for divine and human law was thrown away, just as if men were thenceforth authorized to commit all crimes without restraint." Grotius is generally called the father of modern international law, and he deserves the title in spite of the fact that he leaned heavily on the work of some of his predecessors in the construction of his system.

In the elaboration of his system Grotius drew upon two sources. In the first place, he made his approach that of the historian, studying the practice of states to find out what principles were accepted—and acceptable—as governing international relations. To this extent his approach was positive, that is, based on actual practice. In the second place, he attempted to fill in the gaps—and also to elevate the tone of international life—by laying down rules which did not rest on customary practice. These he founded upon the conception of natural law, supporting his "natural" principles by reference (1) to reason, as employed in the Roman *ius naturale*; (2) to the *ius gentium*; and (3) to divine law as set forth in the Scriptures. Thus he did two distinct things which, however, remained long confused. He stated as law the practice of states, and he stated as law what can best be described as international ethics. He confused what was with what, in his judgment, should be the legal basis of international relations. The significant thing is that Grotius introduced the view that, in spite of its sovereignty, the state could be held to the observance of a code similar to that which governs the conduct of individuals. Thus he broke sharply from the Machiavellian views as to the basis of international relations.

This Grotian conception remained fundamental even as international law came gradually, and strikingly during the nineteenth century, to assume a more positive form, resting on cus-

tomary practice and on explicit, or treaty, agreement among the states. For if a customary rule of law, or a treaty agreement, is to have permanent and binding force, the view must be accepted that obligations assumed cannot be violated at the will of the state. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that during the earlier stages of its development, so-called international law was marked as much by its breach as by its observance. In the actual international practices of states, the two conceptions are still in evidence as opposing forces—the Grotian conception of a system of international relations governed by a controlling code of law as a determinant of what is right, and the Machiavellian conception that whatever serves to promote the interests of the state is justified.

Certainly, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries state power was of much more importance than law in fixing the conditions of international intercourse. The dynastic rulers of the European states as sovereigns within the state were really subject to no limitation in the determination of internal policy except that fixed by the power which they possessed. The law was their creation rather than an effective limitation on their power. It is, therefore, not remarkable that they should have regarded their will to be uncontrolled by law in international relations, except as expediency dictated a profession of regard for asserted legal principles. The test was that of comparative advantage. If a state, in an international controversy, concluded that it could gain more than it would lose by attempting to hold another state to a course asserted to be legal, it would take a position professing its adherence to the rule of law. Otherwise, the course would be marked out on the basis of power.

The purpose of power, as conceived by the absolutist rulers, was to gain more power. This aim involved an extension of the territories of the state. Consequently, the international relations of Europe were characterized, through the eighteenth century, by wars of aggrandizement, which could only find their justification in terms of their effect in increasing the power of the state. The Grotian conception of the "just" war was a war in defense of the right of a state to independence, terri-

torial integrity, and the observance of the rules of international intercourse. This conception, however, gave way, even in law, to the idea that a war was justified if it was successful. Positive international law came to be concerned with the regulation of the relations of states in times of peace and in times of war, and with definitions of the position of neutrals in relation to belligerents. It accepted war, regardless of the cause, as justified in the promotion of state interests. Thus it did not concern itself with the causes of war but merely with its regulation. Since, at that time, the contacts of states were established almost exclusively in terms of antagonism, it followed that the international law of war and neutrality came to be much more highly developed than the law of peace.

#### **Extension of the field of international law**

Until the nineteenth century the peace-time contacts of states were irregular and casual. Great movements of peoples, when they took place, were for purposes of conquest and not for purposes of peaceful trade. The individual Frenchman knew the German, when he knew him at all, as an enemy against whom he had been fighting. There was not the constant and regular movement of shipping with which we are so familiar today. Nor was there so great an interweaving of economic life which has made each community dependent on others for foodstuffs, raw materials, and markets. Consequently the demands on international law were comparatively limited. There was no great need except (1) for assurance that if an embassy was sent to a foreign country its members would be protected so that they could fulfill their mission, (2) for a definition of frontiers, (3) for the establishment of principles governing the use of the high seas and of territorial waters, (4) for rules setting the limits to territorial rights based upon discovery and occupation of non-European lands, and (5) for the regulation of war so that resulting injury might be reduced.

Not only did international law concern itself with a limited number of subjects; there was a corresponding narrowness in the geographical area of its operations. The world embraced



within the rule of law was a European Christian world. The European states had relations with the non-European world, it is true, but they were separately adjusted outside the European system. Thus there was trade with the East through Constantinople, and contact with various parts of the Ottoman Empire, and there were commercial relations with some parts of the Far East. But relations at Constantinople were regulated on the basis of the *Capitulations*, that is, by grants of special privileges and concessions to European nations; while relations at Canton and at Nagasaki, until after the middle of the last century, were fixed on a restrictive basis established respectively by China and Japan. The Philippines and parts of India were being brought within the European system as conquered communities rather than as independent states, as Africa came to be somewhat later. And both North and South America were partitioned among the states of Europe as colonies.

But this condition rapidly changed after the American Revolution. First, the United States entered into relations with the states of Europe, within the framework of the European system of international law. Subsequently, much of the Western Hemisphere broke off from dependency on European states, until, with the freeing of Cuba from Spanish control, only Canada, the Guianas, and some of the islands in the West Indies remained dependent. And now Canada is, to all intents, a separate member of the family of nations. Before the nineteenth century then, the Americas merely affected international relations by serving as a bone of contention among the European states; since then, the American states have directly participated in international relations instead of only affecting them.

Furthermore, since 1800, the family of nations has been expanded by the inclusion of states of a non-European and non-Christian background. China and Japan were brought out of their seclusion and practically forced to enter into treaty relations with the European states, in 1842 and 1854 respectively. Turkey was formally admitted into the European society in 1856, largely for the purpose of protecting her—by throwing

the safeguards of law about her—against the pressure of certain European states. And gradually the Balkan states, when they had thrust off the Turkish yoke, gained recognition as independent states. Finally, the settlements following the World War resulted in a considerable enlargement of the number of recognized states. Thus one notable change affecting international relations has been the enlargement of the number of those political societies which have *international personality*, and which have, consequently, been enabled to participate in international relations. The world today is organized into approximately sixty units established on a territorial basis and on the theoretical basis of independence of state action and policy.

### **The balance-of-power principle**

The discussion thus far makes it clear that the development of international law and the extension of the field of its operation did not destroy the conception of the power-state as the most effective instrument for the realization of the ambitious aims of the state, nor did it afford any effective check upon the exercise of that power to gain the ends of the state. A situation existed, therefore, that constituted a perpetual threat to the maintenance of the European states-system, for if the power of one state increased at the expense of others the effect would be to establish its preponderance, and its preponderance would threaten the independence of all other states. The ultimate result would be the re-establishment of empire in Europe—the very antithesis of the states-system. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries certain powerful states of Europe did in fact threaten to create such a situation. To meet such threats *coalitions* of states were formed to provide a counterbalance to the power of the threatening state. Out of this practice arose the conception of the balance of power as a working principle of European politics. No state could be permitted to become so strong as to impose its will on others. For example, when France, under Louis XIV, became the strongest state in continental Europe, coalitions were formed to prevent the further expansion of France. Similar

action was taken to check Napoleon when his armies went through Europe toppling thrones and wiping independent states off the map. In both cases, as well as in others that might be mentioned, it was England which took the lead in establishing the coalition against the strongest European state. Thus the principle of balance became a cardinal one in English policy.

But, while the balance-of-power principle came to be referred to as the working principle of European politics, it must not be understood that Continental states, except as they were the weaker ones, sought merely to establish and maintain a balance, so far as their own policies were concerned. Power-politics has as its end the establishment not of a balance but of a preponderance of power for the state. Lacking the ability to establish its own superiority at a given moment, the state directs its energies toward preventing another state from acquiring a preponderance of power. Only England was actually interested in maintaining a balance. This was for two reasons. First, if one state or group of states dominated the Continent, it would be in a position then, and then only, to threaten England. Second, a balance on the Continent enabled England, as a makeweight, to exercise a decisive influence in European politics and to have a relatively free hand in the development of her commercial and colonial interests. In other words, the balance-of-power principle operated so as to increase English power. But it was essentially an unstable thing, given the shifts in relationship and internal changes which affected the power of states. Therefore, instead of keeping Europe in peaceful equilibrium, it necessitated continuous conflict and war as a means of determining whether, in fact, a balance existed.

### **The Concert-of-Europe principle**

At the end of the eighteenth century the unstable balance which had been established on the basis of the Treaty of Paris of 1763 that ended the Seven Years' War was destroyed as a result of the French Revolution and the successes first of revolutionary and then of Napoleonic France. In spite of the



formation of coalitions headed by England against France it seemed for a time as though Europe would be organized under French dominance. In the end, however, a coalition overthrew Napoleon (1815) and France was limited to her former boundaries. The threat, nevertheless, had been so real, and the fear of France so great, that the attempt was made to stabilize the European world of independent states by the resort to a different principle than that of the balance of power maintained by temporary coalitions. It is known as the principle of the Concert of Europe.

The Concert-of-Europe idea grew out of the state of affairs existing at the close of the Napoleonic wars. The status of Europe was then fixed by the Treaty of Vienna (1815), which was declared to be the public law of Europe; that is to say, the treaty gave legal sanction to all the political, territorial, and other changes established by the settlement at the close of the conflict. The four Powers—Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria—whose alliance had brought about the overthrow of Napoleon, sought to make themselves the custodians and guardians of the settlement by preserving their alliance and projecting it into the period of peace. This alliance—the Quadruple Alliance<sup>1</sup>—asserted the right to act in defense of the public order wherever it was threatened. Thus it established, on a Great Power basis, the so-called Concert of Europe, and, by asserting a right of intervention in the internal affairs of European states, sought to establish the principle of external control, on the basis of united action, of state policy. In the international relations of the European states it was asserted that no change in the *status quo* could be made without general approval being sought and gained. A conference of the Great Powers became the means for granting this approval of change.

While this idea of the Concert was maintained throughout the nineteenth century it soon became more of an idea than a

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<sup>1</sup>The Quadruple Alliance was the politically effective and active organization within what was called the Holy Alliance, which theoretically represented all of the states of Europe. So obscure was the relation between the two at the time, that the acts of the Quadruple Alliance were commonly thought to be the acts of the Holy Alliance.

reality. Initially, the Four-Power alliance was nothing but an instrument of reaction. It was successful in restoring the *status quo* after revolutions had occurred in Spain and in Italy, but, as its purposes became revealed, England cooled off and withdrew to her traditional aloofness from Continental entanglements. While her place was partially taken by France, the unity of the Powers was never completely regained. Consequently, as changes began to be made in the European order, the Concert usually functioned merely as a ratifying or, at the best, a modifying agency. Conferences were held, but for the purpose of putting the stamp of general approval on actions which had been taken by separate states to promote their own ends. Thus Belgium broke off from The Netherlands, but the status of permanent neutrality which it acquired was fixed by agreement among the Great Powers. The Crimean War was waged by England and France against Russia, but the conditions of peace were submitted to a conference composed of more than the belligerent states. Russia waged war on Turkey, but the Concert was revived, with the holding of the Congress of Berlin, to revise the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano. Meanwhile, the European peace was disturbed by the wars of Italian and German unification without the Concert idea being brought into play. It did, however, have distinct utility during the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century in controlling Great Power relationships as they were affected by the emergence of new states in the Balkans, and in the adjustment of African rivalries.

#### **Collapse of the Concert method, 1914**

During the period between 1870 and 1914 events happened which tended finally to destroy the utility of the Concert method in the settlement of international disputes. Shortly after the middle of the nineteenth century the balance of forces in Europe was fundamentally upset by the unification of Italy, but more especially by the creation of the German Empire. Germany now became the strongest single state on the Continent. This dominant position was consolidated by the formation of the

*Triple Alliance*, composed of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. The fear of German power led France to seek support through the formation of a counter system of alliances, avowedly to restore the balance. In 1894 France drew Russia into a dual alliance; in 1904 she entered into an entente with Great Britain; and in 1907 an entente between Great Britain and Russia completed what came to be called the *Triple Entente*. This growing commitment of England to one group of states on the Continent rapidly lessened her ability to play the part of a makeweight in establishing and maintaining a balance of power. It meant that as time went on two solidifying alliances confronted each other in European and world politics. As one international crisis followed another in the years from 1905 to 1914 it became increasingly difficult to adjust conflicting interests by resort to conference—the traditional and appropriate method of the Concert—because the issues involved could not be dealt with on their merits. War was averted through conference action during these years, but partly because neither side was completely convinced of the strength of its own alliances or of the superiority of its own power as compared with that of the other, in the event of war. Each crisis, however, had the effect of drawing the lines of the two major groups tighter until, by 1914, through the division of Europe into two armed camps, the conditions necessary for successful action of the Concert had been lost. When the Austro-Serbian dispute brought on the final crisis in July, 1914, the Concert mechanism could not even be employed because of fear among the big Powers that acceptance of the British foreign minister's frantic proposals for a concert to consider the issues raised might be taken as an indication of weakness which would lead to defeat in the conference itself. This situation revealed one of the major weaknesses of a Concert system which depended on the ability to improvise a conference after a crisis had arisen. There was no machinery in existence to bring the Powers automatically into conference in the event of a crisis. Under these circumstances diplomacy failed to find a peaceful solution of the Austro-Serbian problem and the World War was the result.



**Establishment of a World Concert, 1919-1920**

After the World War the attempt was made to supplant the balance-of-power idea with that of an organization which would permanently establish the working principles of the old Concert of Europe and extend it to the entire world. To achieve this general end the League of Nations was established. The League provided for (1) international coöperation, through conference and through administrative organization, to find solutions for common problems; (2) the enforced utilization of machinery for the peaceful solution of international disputes; and (3) collective action to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the states-members of the League, in the event of an aggressive attack on one of them. These provisions represented the League modification of the traditional system of national sovereignty and the system of the balance of power.

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## INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER a survey was made of the development of the contemporary states-system. It was described as made up of independent political societies carrying on their intercourse mainly through agencies controlled by the state, but within limits set by the rules of international law. It was made clear, however, that not all of the relations of states are regulated under the rule of law. In fact, the most important of them fall within the field of national policy, and thus involve conflict lying outside the application of the rule of law. It was emphasized, consequently, that a primary emphasis in statecraft is placed upon national power because of a realization that the policies of one state can be put into effect over the objections of another only if the first state has a superiority of power. This idea of power as the basis of international politics is implicit in alliances and also in such a conception as that of the balance of power. As a Great Power arrangement it was also implicit in the idea of the Concert of Europe.

There have been, however, some important developments in international relations which represent a conscious movement away from the power basis of international politics and also away from the traditional states-system. Of these developments nothing has been said thus far. Their culminating



point lies in the postwar period of the twentieth century. In the present chapter, which has to do with international problems, the emphasis will continue to be put on the national state in its relation to other national states, for the problems of contemporary international society have grown out of the national nature of the existing states-system. Some developments of the twentieth century represent a new approach to the solution of these problems. These will be treated in the chapter following together with nineteenth-century modifications of the states-system in the direction of internationalism.

### **International contacts and international problems**

In the beginning of our study of international relations attention was directed to the simple fact that interrelations of peoples grew out of contacts, and that as contacts multiply interrelations multiply. At this point the thought may be extended from contacts to problems, for it is equally true that as international contacts and relations multiply international problems multiply. In very general terms, this fact lies at the base of the multiplicity of our contemporary international difficulties.

Reference was made in the preceding chapter to the extension of the family of nations to include non-European states, and to the increase in the number of independent states within the European world. This in itself has meant a complication of the problem of international relations since it is evident that it increases the possibilities of friction. There are more boundaries to be disputed over. Each new state signalizes the achievement of political independence by the erection of a tariff wall around itself, and each new tariff wall enlarges the possible grounds for friction. There is a greater variety of customs formalities, with consequent disputes. Again, since each state determines its own political composition by defining for itself the conditions under which one may acquire its nationality, a wider field for conflict over nationality laws is created. There is a multiplying of separate authorities, and a consequent enlargement of the range of possibility of disputes over jurisdiction. There are also more states, with a

theoretically equal voice, to participate in the making of international law, with a correspondingly lessened chance of unanimous agreement. There is a greater disparity between states in terms of size, wealth, international interests, and power, with a possible division in interest between the large and the small states. In short, the more states there are, the larger is the number of separate national policies, and the greater the likelihood of conflict between states over national policies.

### PROBLEMS INVOLVING THE STATUS OF INDIVIDUALS

Conflicts of national policy have created numerous problems involving the relation of the state to certain categories of individuals. Many such problems have to do with questions of citizenship and political allegiance.

#### Citizenship and political allegiance

The political status of the individual is determined, in the first instance, by birth. But some states accept as citizens all individuals who have been born within the national territory, regardless of the nationality of the parent, while others define allegiance in terms of the nationality of the parent, regardless of the place of birth. Thus a child born in the United States of, let us say, Japanese parents, is a citizen of the United States under our laws, but at the same time he is a citizen of Japan under the laws of that country. In other words, he has dual allegiance. Of course, as long as he resides in the United States this country is in a position to make effective its claim to his allegiance as against Japanese claims. But if he should go to Japan, even though only on a visit, that country would be in a position to hold him to the fulfillment of any obligation which he may have under his allegiance to that country. The United States, on the other hand, might be led to object on the ground that he was an American citizen by birth and that he was entitled to treatment as such. In a third country both the United States and Japan might be led to insist on the right to afford him their protection. Under these circumstances it be-

comes necessary for the two countries to reach an agreement as to the status of the individual whom each may claim as a national.

A somewhat similar question arises when an individual changes his nationality by the procedure of *naturalization*. If he is not thereby to have a dual status, it is necessary for an agreement to be reached by which the country of his birth accepts the fact that naturalization in another country carries with it his expatriation, that is, the loss of his original nationality. The United States, as the leading country which has augmented its population by immigration, was forced to insist that there was a right of expatriation through naturalization. But to secure acceptance of this view required extended negotiation with the governments of the European states. By 1914 it appeared that satisfactory treaty arrangements had been made reducing to a minimum the possibility of conflict of policies over the nationality of the individual in such cases.

Just before the World War the old problem of the status of the individual appeared in a new form as a result of new nationality laws passed in Germany.<sup>1</sup> Under these laws Germans do not necessarily divest themselves of their original nationality by naturalization in another country. They receive permission from their own country to retain German nationality if they apply for the permission before naturalization. These arrangements mean that the German tie of blood or nationality is now held to be stronger than that of an acquired political allegiance. Thus in the future a state receiving and naturalizing German immigrants may find them taking their political direction from a foreign government, and it may find that foreign government insisting on its right to act in behalf of those whom the other state may properly regard as its own citizens. It will be perceived that infinite possibilities of international conflict are thus presented.

In 1938 Germany advanced another doctrine which may be regarded as a corollary of the measure described above. The government asserted the right to interest itself in the treatment

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<sup>1</sup>These laws forecast application of the Nazi and Fascist doctrines of the nature of the state.



accorded to those who are German by blood but not by political allegiance. This claim implies a right to intervene in the internal affairs of a state having a minority population of German blood, and thus carries with it a significant restriction of the sovereignty and independence of the state, if the claim is accepted.

### **Resident aliens**

Problems of international relations involving the status of the individual are not restricted to those growing out of conflicting claims to the allegiance of the individual. Much more numerous and complicated problems arise when the government of the state attempts to follow its citizens abroad and afford them protection in their persons and property rights against the government of the state in which they have taken up residence as aliens. Questions involving the protection of nationals abroad arise in two somewhat different sets of circumstances. First, they are to be found in the relations of the politically and economically more advanced and stable states which are roughly on about the same level of power, as in the relations of the United States and England or France and Italy. Second, they may arise in the relations of the more advanced with the economically or politically "backward" states, or with countries suffering from political and economic maladjustments leading to disorder and revolution. In this second case, the problems may be those of imperialism as well as those of the simple protection of the legitimate interests of nationals abroad. Otherwise, the problem is similar in nature in the two cases, although it may be aggravated and complicated in its solution by the "backwardness" of the country involved.

In the first case, the relations involved center around the negotiation of treaties defining the status of the domiciled alien. It may be necessary to secure for him the right to own land, or to engage in forms of economic activity which might otherwise be reserved to citizens of the country. Governmental activity may be necessary to insure that its nationals, as domiciled aliens, are not discriminated against in these and other respects; that is, are not denied rights enjoyed by the

nationals coming from other states. And after the rights of the national have been agreed upon it may be necessary to stand behind him to see that his established rights are duly respected, and to demand reparation in case they are not.

The United States, for example, has been confronted on a number of occasions with requests for action in support of the recognized rights of members of a particular alien group. Thus when the lives of Italians were lost and their properties destroyed in consequence of anti-Italian rioting at New Orleans in 1891, the Italian government properly requested action to safeguard the rights of its nationals. On numerous occasions the interests of Chinese and Japanese have not been adequately protected, and their governments have been led to protest. Similar situations arise in other countries. The policy of protection here involves, at the maximum, two things. First, the state seeks to secure for its nationals who may go to some other state for purposes of residence or trade the same position as that possessed by the nationals of that state, or at least as favorable a position as that possessed by any other group of aliens in that state. Second, it insists that their personal and property rights be as adequately safeguarded as those of the citizens of the state. Thus it is considered to be the responsibility of the state receiving aliens to afford them reasonable protection, and the right of the state from which they come to act in their behalf to insure that the receiving state properly discharge its responsibilities to them.

But in the relations of relatively advanced states, especially if they are also powerful, with those in an economically or politically less advanced state of development, the attempt is frequently made to require greater security for the alien than that of the native himself. The standards of administration of justice, for example, in cases involving aliens, may be the higher standards of the state from which the alien comes rather than those of the country in which he finds himself. His government may seek to insist on the observance of its own legal standards where property rights are involved, rather than the standards applied to the natives of the country. Where this is the case there may be less willingness to assume responsibility

because what is insisted upon is discrimination in favor of the alien and against the native rather than equality of protection. This, in turn, may lead to resentment which may result in actual discrimination against the alien and in favor of the national. In either event friction will be engendered, with the result that the relations of the two states may become so unfriendly as to lead to retaliation and even to hostilities.

In some important respects state policy, as it affects the individual, is determined by the idea of national unity. Thus where there are groups of aliens within the state it is felt to be desirable to persuade or compel them to change their political status by naturalization, or at least to cause them to accept a "denationalized" status to the extent of agreeing to forego the protection of the state of their origin. In the latter case a government may demand of domiciled aliens that they agree, as a condition of being permitted to do business in the state, not to ask their own state to exert itself in their behalf. At the same time, it may seek to get the foreign state concerned to accept the principle of nonintervention in behalf of its nationals.

Both of these approaches to a solution of the problem commend themselves to the weaker states. Thus the Latin American states sought to get the United States to accept the principle of nonintervention, and finally secured its adoption in an agreement entered into at one of the Pan-American conferences. And Mexico laid the first of these principles down as one to be accepted by foreigners and foreign concerns doing business in that country. However, diplomatic action in behalf of nationals, either upon their request or without it, continues, as is indicated in the controversy over the nationalization by Mexico in 1938 of foreign-owned oil properties. England, especially, raised vigorous objections to the Mexican action, and the controversy was acute enough to bring about a severance by Mexico of diplomatic relations. It is obvious that one reason why the weaker states follow such policies is their desire to prevent foreign interference in their domestic affairs. But another purpose is unquestionably the one referred to at the outset, that of creating unity of interest and of



relationship within the state, and thus its greater nationalization.

### PROBLEMS OF NATIONALISM

In relations of the kind just discussed the problems presented have resulted from emigration and immigration, either of individuals or of capital. They are impossible of amicable solution only when the state is deliberately seeking to use its nationals who have gone abroad to serve imperialist, that is to say, political purposes.

#### Nationalism as a factor in international politics

Much more difficult and dangerous are the international problems growing out of nationalism. It will be recalled that during the Age of Revolution the French carried with them over Europe the idea of political nationalism as a revolutionary idea, and thus helped to create a powerful drive among peoples for the creation of states basically national in character. The general effect of these movements was to modify old frontiers and destroy traditional political establishments. Such changes disturbed international arrangements and either threatened or destroyed international peace. Nationalism also stimulated and continues to stimulate minority nationalist groups within certain states to rebel against treatment accorded them by what are to them alien governments; on occasion such a minority group has risen against the state in armed resistance. For these general reasons nationalism has created some of the most serious problems of international relations. This point will become clear if we turn to some of the historical aspects of the subject.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the German people culturally comprised a nation, but politically they were divided into some thirty-odd states. The French Revolution had a powerfully exciting effect on German nationalism; both in 1830 and in 1848 attempts were made by liberal leaders to rouse the German people. The attempt of 1848 to achieve national unity by popular, revolutionary action failed; but under the leadership of Bismarck unification was accomplished

in 1870. It was his superior statesmanship that enabled him to succeed without raising a widespread European war. As it was, unification involved our localized conflict with Denmark, a second with Austria, and a third with France. The sudden emergence of a new, first-class state on the Continent disturbed the balance of power; and to preserve the fruits of his victories, Bismarck felt it necessary to build up a complicated system of alliances; these had a profound effect upon the international relations of Europe and led finally to the division of Europe into hostile groups, the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente.<sup>1</sup> Besides, it was in the course of unification that Germany took the fateful step of annexing the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, an action which, since it forced many Frenchmen under the German flag, directed French national spirit into warlike channels.

In the Italian peninsula, likewise, nationalism had stirred the people to attempt to convert a cultural nation into a united state. There, too, the popular movement in 1848 failed. It was left to the statesmanship of Cavour of Sardinia to succeed a short time later (1860), but only at the expense of a war between the little state of Sardinia and the Austrian power, a conflict into which France was drawn on the Sardinian side. Even then some Italians were left outside the state, just as some Germans were not included in the united Germany.

Germany and Italy offer two striking examples of nationalism as a disturbing force in international relations. The list might be extended to include such events as the Greek war for independence against the Turks in the 1820's, the successful revolt of the Belgians against Holland during the next decade, and the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. Each of those events led to a long period of anxious negotiations designed to obviate a general European war. As will be pointed out shortly, the peace conference following the World War attempted to give greater political stability to Europe by a rearrangement of national frontiers in the Balkans and in central Europe, but it now appears to have created as many problems as it settled. Nationalism remains a complicating factor in world politics.

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 771 f.

**Problems of minority groups**

Problems in international relations caused by minority groups are merely another phase of the problems of nationalism. When the term "minorities problems" is used in the field of international politics it has reference to problems resulting from the presence of population minorities of one nationality in a state dominated politically by another nationality. Such problems may take one of several forms. From a nationality standpoint the minority group may belong in a neighboring state; that is, one within which the majority of the people are of its nationality. Or a state may contain a minority group which would like to establish itself as an independent state. In order to create homogeneity under these conditions the state tends to follow policies usually designed to denationalize the minority groups by depriving them of the right of preserving their cultural existence through the continued use of their own national language, through the use of their own inherited forms of religion, and through the exercise of the rights of local self-government. Such policies have an exciting effect in two directions: (1) they stimulate an interest on the part of the minority in securing either its independence or its incorporation in the neighboring state—if there is a neighboring state of its own nationality; and (2) they are likely to stimulate a desire on the part of the neighboring state to extend its frontiers so as to complete its own national unity. Thus the result of following policies designed to create unity within the state may be to create conflict within it, and to associate outside governments or peoples with that conflict. Consequently, international relations inevitably become involved in what the government of the state concerned regards as purely a domestic question.

Reference to some historical instances will make more concrete the relation between minorities problems and international relations. Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary afford examples in the prewar period.

In Germany and Russia it was considered that the state must be nationalized by making "good Germans" and "good Rus-



sians" of the non-national elements—such as Poles, Finns, Lorrainers, Danes, and others—who had been thrust, either by the accidents of history or through conquest, within the limits of the national state. The result was policies of "Germanization" or "Russification." As has been stated, the policies commonly followed to denationalize these groups involved attempts to force the language of the dominant group upon the minorities, to establish religious uniformity, and otherwise to promote the exchange of minority culture traits for those of the majority.

In the case of Germany, the minority population in Lorraine—and to an extent, in Alsace—offers a good example of how minority problems may become international problems. The dissatisfaction of many of the French-speaking population of Alsace and Lorraine encouraged the desire for a return of these provinces to France. At the same time, national pride in France kept alive the determination to recover the lost provinces if the opportunity arose. Simply stated, it was this situation that fed the *revanche* movement in France. It continued to embitter Franco-German relations periodically from 1871 to 1914, and when the World War broke, the recovery of Alsace and Lorraine became a major objective of the French. In the case of Russia, the harsh treatment of the minority group of Poles not only led to Polish armed uprisings but it thrust Poland into the center of several more or less critical diplomatic controversies in which France and Great Britain attempted to give support to the Poles.

Austria-Hungary, before the World War, was a polyglot state of many "nations." There were Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks in the north; in the east, Transylvanians shut off from the people of their own nationality in Roumania; and in the south, a medley of Slavic peoples, among whom was the minority group of Serbs situated just across the frontier from the little state of Serbia. The discontent and turbulence of these minority groups made Austria-Hungary politically unstable. The Serbian situation proved to be most disastrous to Austria, for it was Serb nationalism, fanned to fever heat, that embroiled Austria and Serbia in a bitter quarrel that

finally drew the two states into war; and it was the Austrian war against Serbia that led to the World War in July, 1914.

### **Attempts to solve minorities problems**

At the close of the World War it was clear to the statesmen who sat down to formulate the terms of the Treaty of Versailles that the spirit of nationalism working within these groups of subject peoples had become so explosive as to endanger the political stability of Europe. Something needed to be done to satisfy the longings of these peoples for political independence. The problems were not everywhere the same. (1) There were those large groups, like the Czechs of Bohemia who had long been a subject community in Austria-Hungary, and the Poles who had been ruthlessly distributed among the Russian, German, and Austrian states. Culturally these peoples constituted nations. What they now demanded was the right to preserve their culture by organizing themselves into independent states. (2) A somewhat different aspect of the problem appeared in the case of smaller cultural groups that lay contiguous to independent states of their own culture, like the Transylvanians of Hungary, who were culturally related to their neighbors in Roumania; and like some of the south Slavs, who were culturally related to the Serbians just across the frontier, but who had been prevented from joining their fellow Serbs by reason of their incorporation in the Austro-Hungarian state. (3) There were numerous smaller, scattered groups which could neither be organized into independent states nor easily joined to a neighboring state. Such were the German communities in Bohemia and Poland, the Austrians in Italy, and the Lithuanians in Poland.

The Paris Peace Conference (1919) attempted to solve the first of these problems by theoretically basing the territorial settlement of Europe on the principle of the self-determination of peoples. The weakness in its application is to be found in the fact that it was uniformly applied in such a way as to undermine the Central Powers. But this does not alter the fact that it was given a theoretical application on a wide scale. The result was to break up Austria-Hungary into its com-

ponent national elements. Thus Hungary and German Austria were left standing alone, while the amputated territories were either erected into new states or joined to neighboring ones. These new creations, known as the Succession States, were established on the basis of nationality; and boundaries were fixed at the expense of prewar Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, and Russia, so that the old Serbia has disappeared and Yugoslavia has taken its place, and a greater Roumania has been placed on the international chessboard. In addition, a number of new states have been recognized which have emerged out of the former Russian Empire, and they also have been justified on the basis of nationality.

But this application of the principle of self-determination did not solve the problem of minorities still remaining as subject peoples. Many of these new states contain substantial national minorities. Consequently several of them, as a condition of recognition as members of the society of states, were compelled to enter into treaties with the Allied Powers by which they agreed to certain treatment of minorities in respect of nationality, language, and religion. Under these treaties the dominant culture group in the state agreed, in effect, to tolerate rather than to denationalize those of divergent cultures. With this "internationally guaranteed" toleration, it was hoped to make minority groups better contented with their situation. The rights of minorities under the treaties were placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations. It should be noted, however, that this principle of toleration was not universally applied. It found application only among the Succession States. Italy, for example, was under no such obligation toward the Germans brought within the Italian state under the terms of the peace treaties.

This application of the principle of toleration only to the newer states is unquestionably one of the reasons why the method embodied in the minorities' treaties failed to solve the problem. The states taking it upon themselves to enforce the treaty obligation did not believe in the principle for themselves. Thus it is not to be wondered at if they failed to act vigorously to preserve minority rights in friendly countries.



Neither is it a matter for wonder if the states controlled by the treaties sought to avoid obligations which prevented them from creating the cultural uniformity which the guaranteeing states felt was essential to their own security. The philosophy of political nationalism proved to be too deeply imbedded to render successful this halfway move toward its modification through the institution of international responsibility for the treatment of minority groups. Furthermore, those states, such as Germany, whose national unity had not been completed, were not so much interested in the maintenance of the cultural rights of the members of their culture group within another state as they were in the extension of their frontiers so that state and nation would assume an identity. Thus their policies were directed toward the same ends as in prewar days. When the minorities' states—those bound by treaty to respect minority rights—perceived this attitude, their determination was intensified to break loose from the restraints imposed upon them. Consequently, from this standpoint, the tentative internationalism of the first postwar years was followed by a renewal of conflict between competing nationalisms. Italy first reverted completely to the nationalist philosophy with the establishment of the Fascist régime in that country. Germany followed with the attainment of power by the National Socialists under Hitler.

#### **Nazi doctrines and the problem of minorities**

The Nazi doctrines placed a primary emphasis on "race" and the blood tie as the basis of state allegiance. Thus it was insisted that the boundaries of the state must be extended until all Germans were included in it. As soon as the Nazis felt that they had grown sufficiently powerful, Austria was absorbed into the German state. Next, the German minority in Czechoslovakia was stimulated to demand a measure of autonomy. When Czechoslovakia showed a spirit of independence, the Nazis possessed themselves (1938) of Sudetenland—that part of Czechoslovakia in which the German minority group was most numerous. Later—early in 1939—the Nazis seized practically all of Czechoslovakia, and that coun-

try ceased to exist as a nation. It was laid down in German policy that Germany would interest herself positively in the treatment accorded to Germans everywhere. This was not, apparently, so much for the purpose of preventing oppression as for establishing a basis for the disruption of such states as Czechoslovakia. Thus after the disruption had been accomplished through the pressures of nationalism German objectives were extended to include the control of the destinies of the non-German Czechs and Slovaks. This obviously presents the possibility of future conflict between Germany and such other states as present obstacles to the attainment of her nationalist ends.

Another source of international friction growing out of "racial" nationalism—friction which has spread from Germany to other European countries—is to be found in anti-Semitism, which is still another phase of the minorities problem. Anti-Semitism is, of course, not new, nor a creation of the Nazi party. The treatment of the Jews in Russia was, for example, a matter of protest by the United States in prewar days. Humanitarian considerations inevitably lead to protest against too brutal treatment of human beings, even though similar treatment may be meted out by the government to its own citizens. Such humanitarian protests, however, usually are preceded and reinforced by the presence within the protesting state of politically important people of the same nationality or the same religious persuasion as those who are being oppressed in another country. The Jews constitute such a group in the United States and in England. They were, however, only occasionally and exceptionally able, as in the event of a pogrom in Russia, to obtain state action in behalf of non-American and non-English Jews until such time as anti-Semitism became part of the official policy of important states. Since then, entirely apart from humanitarian considerations, anti-Semitism in the policy of a state has become of concern to other states because it has thrown on them the burden of receiving and finding a livelihood for Jews who are impelled to leave the countries of their birth and nationality as the only alternative to the acceptance of a degraded status in their

home land. Under these circumstances, what are viewed traditionally as matters of exclusive domestic concern become of direct international significance.

### PROBLEMS OF IMPERIALISM

Modern imperialism has been examined in an earlier chapter.<sup>1</sup> Here the purpose is to consider how the imperialist policies of states have affected international relations during the last half century. The profound effect of imperialism on international developments will be better understood if we first glance over the economic and political trends in history up to the third quarter of the nineteenth century when the new era of imperialism—the new imperialism as it is called—began.

#### **The political and economic integration of society**

Our survey of the development of civilization during the Christian era has revealed a steady economic and political integration of peoples. That is to say, society has steadily broadened its economic life until small communities—which once drew their material subsistence from limited local areas—having first joined hands economically with other communities about them now draw upon the ends of the earth to satisfy their economic needs; and parallel with this economic integration, society has drawn upon its experience to combine ever larger groups under one political organization or under subordinate political units linked to a central political organization.

In these two parallel movements, however, the political has lagged behind the economic; our economic life seeks to assume a world pattern—a world economy, as we have seen; while politically we have hardly passed beyond the pattern set by the national state, or at best, by the imperial state. Because of the adherence to this national political pattern there are recurrent attempts made to bring the economic order back within the framework of the national states-system. These attempts are represented in the imperialist policies of states,

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 522 ff.



under which they seek to reconcile the existence of a society of independent and sovereign states with the fact of dependence of each state on other states for industrial raw materials, foodstuffs, or markets for its surplus goods. Some international problems which are most difficult of solution grow directly out of this effort to reconcile two opposing trends in historical development. In other words, the failure to achieve world political integration step by step with the development of the world economy has tremendously complicated the problems of relationship of states seeking to maintain themselves in a condition of political independence.

### **Nationalism as a factor in imperialism**

In the persistence of the idea that society should be organized politically on a national basis and that the state should maintain its present sovereign and independent position we have a basic fact that will help to clarify the bearing of imperialism on international relations. For one thing, it is this fact that makes nationalism one of the main roots of imperialism. The relation between the two may be found in two forms: First, political nationalism supplies the emotional driving power which gives popular support for political expansion. This drive is a response to the stimulation of national pride and the sense of cultural superiority which comes with expansion. It is expressed in terms of "manifest destiny," and a moral obligation to promote the advance of backward peoples. Joseph Chamberlain spoke proudly of the British as "the greatest governing race the world has ever seen . . . which will infallibly be the predominant force of future history and universal civilization." And the Navy League of the United States characterized American imperialism as "a duty and a credit to humanity," and the American as the "highest type of imperial master." Jules Ferry exalted the French mission of civilizing backward peoples, and the Germans boldly announced the superiority of their *Kultur*. Most recently the Japanese have emphasized the mission which they have to bring peace, order, and the blessings of civilization to China. It is in this feeling of a civilizing mission that the

explanation is partially to be found of the popular support within the national state for a policy of expansion which involves the imposition of an alien rule on the peoples of so-called backward countries.

In its second form—its economic aspect—nationalism presents an even greater significance as an explanation of national imperialism. It is not necessary to repeat what has already been said about the economic roots of imperialism.<sup>1</sup> For present purposes it is desirable, however, to refer again to the relation of that intensified form of nationalism that led to a new emphasis on the national state as an instrument of power for securing national need and enhancing national prestige. For it is that desire to build state-power as a means of promoting national interests in times of peace and in the emergencies of war that gives to imperialism its chief importance as a factor in international relations. In keeping with these aims, the economic philosophy of nationalism came to be rooted in the idea of economic independence and represented a reaction against that condition of economic interdependence which was referred to in the introductory paragraphs of this section. Economic independence—particularly self-sufficiency in all those materials which are essential in equipping the state for war—would enable the state to play its role in a world of armed states competing for national advantages. Thus imperialism, in one of its important aspects, was a means to an end, the end being to equip the state for a successful part on the stage of international politics. Imperialism is therefore definitely related to power politics, to the emphasis on force as a factor in international relations. The implications of this fact will appear as the discussion of imperialism continues.

Before leaving the subject of nationalism as a factor in imperialism, we should notice the rather contradictory aspect of nationalism which is revealed in the imperialist process. The contradictory feature lies in the fact that imperialism involves the subjugation and the incorporation in the national state of territories inhabited by peoples who are not members

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 525 ff.

of the nation and who cannot be incorporated into the national community. These peoples may have a feeling of nationality, or may develop it later, and a consequent desire for independence. The result may be that English national imperialism may find itself in conflict with Indian nationalism; or American imperialism may be confronted with a Philippine independence movement. These conflicts may be carried on as domestic matters, or they may spread so as to affect international relations. Other states may, for example, take advantage of such a situation so as to embarrass the imperial state by stimulating or aiding independence movements.

### **Imperialism and the emphasis on armament**

After 1870, in response to the imperialist impulse, the industrialized states of Europe began simultaneously to expand their territories. The American region had been closed to European expansion or colonization when the United States declared its attitude in the Monroe Doctrine. Africa, the Near and Middle East, and the Far East, consequently became the regions of active European competition for colonial dominion. And, inevitably, in this competition the European states found themselves in conflict with one another for control of the same areas. After its modernization Japan also entered the competition in the Far East, and at almost the same time the United States established itself in the Philippines and insisted on its right to trade with, and invest in, China in equal competition with the European states and Japan. Thus rivalry for colonial possessions or for access to the raw materials and resources of the politically backward parts of the world became more and more intense, and so became a fruitful source of conflict among the important states. The politics of Europe became extended into the world politics which marked the early twentieth century.

In the pursuit of imperialist interests the leading industrial states have thus steadily extended their colonial possessions, and consequently enlarged their boundaries in this or that direction, until now they have vulnerable appendages in almost every quarter of the globe. National security has ceased in



such cases to be a matter of home defense; the frontiers of the big imperialist states, for practical purposes, are to be found on almost every continent and on numerous islands of the seas, as well as at home. With ever-widening imperial interests to protect, the problem of defense becomes increasingly formidable; and armaments on land and sea have been increased until the world today has taken on the appearance of a vast military camp. The reaction upon the small non-imperialist countries has been clearly observable; most of them, fearing for their safety, have built armaments out of all proportion to their wealth and population. Moreover, the fierce rivalry for colonial possessions has led to the conviction that military and naval power is necessary to put teeth into the demands of diplomatists in competition for colonial prizes. In other words, to be most successful, diplomacy must be backed by the mailed fist held over rivals as a threat of war.

Such a situation in the contemporary world obviously breeds a widespread feeling of fear and insecurity, and every serious controversy over colonial interests tends to produce a crisis during which the issue of war or peace hangs as by a thread. More fundamental still is the fact that excessive armaments are an expression of distrust on the part of statesmen as to the effectiveness of international agreements and agencies to protect the interests of states or to preserve international peace. The conviction still prevails that the measure of what the state gets and what it holds is national power. Such a psychology is unfavorable to the development of effective machinery for an orderly settlement of international disputes and to the maintenance of peace.

### **Imperialism and secret alliances**

Imperialism has been a major factor in the creation of secret alliances, which are often little more than additional instruments of power for safeguarding imperialist possessions already obtained or for acquiring further territory. When states standing alone begin to fear that their own strength is insufficient to achieve their imperial ambitions, they look

for friends—allies. Secret treaties are usually the basis of these alliances, and the provisions in these treaties generally betray the nature of the bargain that has been struck for giving and receiving aid; they look to the acquisition by one or both parts to the treaty of concessions, spheres of influence, and colonies. Considerations of this sort weighed heavily in the establishment of the alliances which divided Europe before the World War. The security of what they already had and the desire to further their imperialist interests in Morocco and Egypt lay at the basis of the entente between France and Great Britain in 1904. This entente was ripened into a virtual alliance largely by the heat generated by the imperialist rivalry between France and Germany on the one hand, and Germany and Great Britain on the other. The impulse which drew Italy into an alliance with the Central Powers was a strong desire to block the further advance of France in north Africa and to pave the way for Italian accessions in Tripoli.

Defensive alliances, so called, have contributed heavily, particularly when they have been kept secret, in creating and complicating international problems. The sense of increased power that comes from alliances—often secretly dedicated to the execution of specific imperialist aggressions—naturally encourages the states concerned to embark upon what it terms a "spirited foreign policy." A spirited foreign policy usually signalizes an aggressive forward movement in colonial adventures. No sooner had France entered into her entente with Great Britain than she began (in 1905) a vigorous intervention in Morocco. Feeling that her own Moroccan interests were threatened, Germany protested so strongly that war was narrowly averted. In 1911 an even graver crisis arose in Morocco out of the continued rivalry of the two powers. In 1908, encouraged by a secret agreement with Russia, Austria-Hungary proclaimed the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and again Europe was brought to the verge of war. When such crises arise, alliances tend to throw serious obstacles in the way of concerted action by diplomatists in their efforts to bring about a peaceful solution of the problems involved.

The combined forces which both make for and flow from

national imperialism make it one of the most prolific sources of international disturbances at the present time, as it has been in the recent past. It lay at the roots of the British war in South Africa in 1899 and the Russo-Japanese conflict over Korea and Manchuria in 1904. It was a major factor in bringing on the world struggle of 1914.

### **The mandates system**

At the close of the World War partial perception of the causal relation of imperialism to conditions making for war brought about an attempt to cope with some of its basic problems. The plan adopted is known as the "mandates system," which was set up under the League of Nations. One of the objects of this system is to safeguard the interests of the native peoples. Another object—of more importance from the standpoint of the immediate discussion—was to allow access to raw materials on equal competitive terms to the nationals of states other than those in control. Herein is an application of the principle of the "open door" made under the supervision of the League of Nations' Commission on Mandates, which receives detailed reports from the mandatory state on the steps it has taken to govern the territories entrusted to it.

The mandates system pointed to a method of solution of the problem of economic imperialism, but it did not solve the problem. Just as in the case of the nationalist problem of minorities, it was applied only to the German colonies and to portions of the prewar Turkish state. England, France, and the United States still have their colonies and have unrestricted control over access to them. This has left Germany with the feeling, voiced strongly since the accession of Hitler to power, that she must regain her colonies in order to be on a footing of equality with the other states.

The failure of the mandates system to provide an effective international control looking to a more equitable distribution of products necessary to industry and of commercial opportunities has left imperialism essentially where it was before the War. The desire for colonial expansion now, as in the past, springs from a consideration of the relation of colonial pos-



sessions to the fortunes of the people of the national state and their relation to state power. Italy, Japan, and Germany are today the states most interested in national expansion. All three claim to be overpopulated and to need additional areas for colonization. All three are industrialized, but without the resources to sustain their industrial economies, and to take care of their expanded populations by means only of industrial activities. All three seek to establish, as far as possible, self-sufficiency in resources and in markets. These considerations are used by Germany not only to support her demand for the restoration of colonies, but also her desire, now largely accomplished, to complete her national unification through the incorporation of Austria, and to dominate eastern Europe. The same considerations were advanced in justification of Japanese expansion into Manchuria and north China. The Italian conquest of Ethiopia found a similar support. Economic considerations, identical with those advanced in support of non-European imperialism, supported the strategic consideration in bringing about Italian and German support of the insurgents in the Spanish civil war. Thus it must be emphasized that postwar imperialism has had the same disturbing effects on international relations that imperialism had before the World War—either leading to war or maintaining a diplomacy based upon the threat of war.

### THE INTERNATIONAL WORLD ON THE EVE OF THE WORLD WAR

References to the part which force plays in international relations have frequently appeared in this study. It is hardly necessary to say that force—potential or actual—pervades the field of international relations on all occasions when differences regarded as vital to the interests of nations arise among states. To comprehend the significance of its role we must, before concluding, again consider the effects of the doctrine of national sovereignty upon the behavior of states in their dealings with one another.

It has been explained that international relations were built upon the basis of the conception of the state as an entity in-

dependent of external control, and equal under the principles of international law to every other member of the family of nations. In this position it asserted its right to be the sole judge of its own acts. Before the nineteenth century, it was pointed out, states were able to make that conception of independence a reality to a great extent; neither states nor the mass of citizens had yet been brought into close or extensive contact with one another, and such contacts as existed were in terms of antagonism rather than in terms of close mutuality of interest.

That situation passed rapidly during the nineteenth century. The growing interdependence of the world following the Industrial Revolution produced a more intimate relationship between states, but the change did not appreciably modify the political theory of state independence. Nevertheless, restrictions on the state in the form of international law were somewhat enlarged and the jurisdiction of the state came to be more carefully defined and delimited. The rules under which the game of war was to be played were elaborated in more and more extensive codes. But each state remained largely the judge of its own conduct, and remained in control of the field of policy. That is, each state largely determined for itself what it was its right, and to its interest, to do in the furtherance of the national interest. When policies of two states brought them into conflict, if the difference could not be adjusted by direct negotiations, and if the subject matter of the dispute was of great enough importance, each state had a right to attempt to impose its views on the other by force. The law itself, together with the treaty rights of states, was supported, in the final analysis, by self-help on the part of the state.

It was under circumstances such as these that the state found it necessary to build up armies and navies of sufficient strength to enable it to defend itself against attack, and also to put into effect the policies which it devised as a means of defending and advancing its national interests. In the building up of its armaments program, the state was the sole judge of the military and naval force necessary to its defense.

Where the interests of two states clashed, it was natural and inevitable that each should arm against the other. And where all states were drawn into a general competition for markets, raw materials, and investment opportunities, it was inevitable that a general competition in armament should begin. All states tended, to the extent of their resources, to follow the maxim of President Washington, "In time of peace prepare for war." As contacts became closer throughout the world, and as more states industrialized themselves, competition became ever keener, and competitive policies bred competitive armament on a scale of increasing magnitude. Ordinarily there was no disposition of governments to use these instruments of force without warning; but once the peaceful efforts of diplomatists had failed, there was danger that nations would be plunged into war.

The World War brought home to the peoples of the world the grave dangers to international peace of unrestricted armaments and secret treaties. It also revealed the dangers inherent in an unorganized and largely anarchical system of international relations. Reliance on a balance of power among independent states had failed to preserve the peace. The Concert of Europe had been destroyed under the impact of rival alliances comprehending the major European states. In any case, a Concert of Europe was too narrow for the purposes of a politics which had come to comprehend the world. Thus it was concluded that the requirements of the world situation called for a league of all of the states of the world, with the double purpose of preserving the peace and of promoting international coöperation. Some foundations for an international organization had already been laid. It remained to extend and to enlarge the foundations and to build upon them a superstructure. This was attempted through the creation of the League of Nations.



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## INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

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**T**HE PRECEDING CHAPTER has explained the character of many of the problems disturbing to order in international relations. Many of those problems, particularly those resulting from disputes over the status of individuals, were said to be generally solvable without serious difficulty. On the other hand, it was pointed out that international problems growing out of nationalism and national imperialism are expressions of the conflicting interests and policies of states, and that states are not disposed to subject them to the test of rules of international law. Consequently, these disputes are frequently far more dangerous to the concord of nations and more difficult to settle. Such solutions of international problems as have been discussed thus far were found within the states-system itself. We pass now to an examination of methods of solution pursued on an international rather than a national basis. This requires a consideration of the international instruments which have been devised and of the agencies and institutions which have been established (1) to bring international relations under control, and (2) to satisfy the needs of an international society, which may be conceived as something distinct in its interests from the several national societies upon which we have thus far concentrated our attention.

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, these developments represent a conscious movement away from the power basis of international politics and away from the traditional states-

system. As such, they introduce us to a new approach to international problems. The impressive and concrete evidence of the new approach appears in the agencies and institutions created after the World War, but the ideas of which they are an expression did not appear first in the twentieth century. The ideas, together with some of the machinery created to carry them into effect, were the result of a historical development. It will therefore be necessary to go back into the nineteenth century to follow the stages of their evolution.

### **Growing urgency of the nineteenth-century problems**

These developments of the nineteenth century were stimulated by the increasing urgency of dealing with an increasingly complicated skein of international relations. To begin with, there was the enlarged scope of these relations. Thus far there has been only incidental reference to the emergence of an international society broader than, but comprehending within itself, the several state societies. This international society, frequently referred to as the family of nations, represents essentially the enlargement of the European family of nations into a world society, including within itself the Asiatic and American states as well as the European. As the scope of the family of nations expanded geographically during the nineteenth century, life both within and among the states became increasingly complicated as the simple agrarian-commercial societies of the end of the eighteenth century developed into the industrial states of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. In consequence, the forces affecting the relations of the members of the international community have multiplied as interdependence economically has resulted from the complication of the industrial processes. Interdependence brings about an increase in relationship, and it has gradually carried with it an appreciation of the value of order and of orderly relationships. But the enlargement of the operative forces has made the establishment of international order a more difficult task at the same time that it has become clear that it is one that must be successfully undertaken if the existing world system is to continue.



A second series of events that have made the solution of international problems more urgent was the result of progress in science and invention as these have affected communication and transport. The nineteenth century witnessed a revolution in these particulars. The result has been that, from the standpoint of contact, the world has steadily contracted in size as measured in communications miles. In 1800 London was not days but weeks distant from New York. This was true both with respect to the movement of peoples and of goods, and with respect to the communication of intelligence. On land, travel was by means of the stagecoach. On the seas, communication and trade were in terms of the sailing packet, dependent on winds and tides. The consequence was that communities were measurably isolated from one another. There was trade, to be sure, but it was relatively slow and uncertain, irregular and spasmodic. By 1900 the steam vessel had supplanted the sailing packet and the stagecoach had been replaced by the railway. Cables had been laid under the ocean, and telegraph lines had been erected on the land. The telephone was coming into use, regular international as well as national postal services were in operation, and the steam printing press had taken the place of the hand press. The consequence of these changes in the methods of communication was that distance had begun to be annihilated. From the standpoint of the movement of peoples and of goods, New York, London, and Tokyo were closer together in 1900 than Boston and New York had been in 1800. And from the standpoint of the communication of intelligence, the change was even more startling. New York and Cincinnati could learn of the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Serajevo, in the Austrian empire, more quickly, in 1914, than Lexington could of the movement of troops out of Boston in 1775. Since 1900 the radio and the airplane have carried this contractive movement still further.

#### **The continuing emphasis on state independence**

Despite the momentous changes indicated above and the multiplication of problems to which they gave rise, the con-

cept of the state persisted in the form it had taken on during the early modern period; that is to say, supreme emphasis continued to be laid on the independence of the state—as, in fact, it is even now. Moreover, it is to be emphasized that prior to the middle of the nineteenth century the fabric of society was almost entirely national. There had emerged, to be sure, the so-called family of nations, but each member of the family was separate and independent to such a degree as to make the conception less of a fiction than a fact. Except for very brief periods there was no regularly constituted family council, there were no common organs of administration. Only too frequently, as has already been suggested, the relations of members of the family were disturbed by conflicts of policy which often resulted in war. And with war there came the breakdown of relationships between the belligerents and a disturbance of the normal relations of neutrals with belligerents and, to some extent, with one another. International conferences were usually called to make peace rather than to solve the peacetime problems of international life. In other words, international conferences met almost exclusively for purposes relating to war, either to bring about its termination, its regulation, or, occasionally, its specific avoidance. This statement holds essentially true despite the fact that periodically plans were presented for unifying the interests of the states, as was the case in the organization of the Concert of Europe.

The strong initial emphasis on the independence of states is not difficult to understand. The attempt had been made through the Roman Catholic Church and the medieval imperial hierarchy to maintain the unity of Europe after the fall of Rome. The development of national cultures, however, served so to distinguish European national groups from one another as to replace the conception of European unity with that of European division. This led to a reaction against the domination both of the Roman Catholic Church and the imperial principle expressed through the Holy Roman Empire. The reaction took the form of an extreme emphasis on national or state sovereignty and independence. After

1648 there was a continual fear lest the state should be subordinated to an external authority with the resultant sacrifice of the interests of both ruler and people. This defensive clinging to the doctrine of state sovereignty became even stronger when, in the nineteenth century, peoples came to constitute themselves as the source of authority within the state. Consequently the centripetal tendencies were continually strengthened as against the centrifugal, until the conceptions of independence of external control and of its corollary, the equality of all states, irrespective of size and power, had assumed the character and quality of dogmas. This extreme conception of independence was valid so long as states were economically self-sufficient and out of intimate contact with one another because of the slowness of communication. Such had been the case in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But, as already explained, the international picture had taken on quite a different appearance during the nineteenth century. Under the altered conditions of the industrial age the dogma of independence became an increasingly serious obstacle to the solution of international problems.

What has been written up to this point should furnish a background necessary for a clearer comprehension of those achievements during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which led up to the League of Nations and its related agencies and institutions. In examining historically the international relations of this period, one gets the impression of a movement, only partially conscious, toward the establishment of a more orderly international life. Progress in this direction took various forms.

### GROWING LIMITATIONS ON STATE INDEPENDENCE

In the light of what was said above of the growing contradiction between the dogma of independence and the facts of an altered international life it is not to be wondered at that despite the assertion of state independence, the control of state behavior through the adoption of rules of international law steadily increased. In an extended form, international



law came to represent a system of rules accepted and habitually observed by states in their relations with one another. During the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century states found it expedient to enter into agreements to govern their conduct by new rules necessitated by the new conditions. The laws especially of war and of neutrality were extended and given definite form by means of explicit international agreement. The laws of peace developed more slowly, on the basis of customary practice and bilateral treaties. Thus the relations of states came to be adjusted on the basis of law in an increasing number of rather specific cases. After the World War the current of development of relations on the basis of the rule of law set in with such apparent strength that it seemed destined within a measurable period of time to supplant entirely the rule of force. Not only did it seem clear that no nation would interpret its right of independence so rigidly as to disregard the established and accepted rules of international law in the development and expression of its policies, but it seemed equally clear that law was soon completely to cover the field of international relations.

Procedures also for the adjustment of international disputes without a resort to war have been in the slow process of evolution during the last century and a quarter. This evolution has followed likewise from a gradual recognition of the fact that states are today dependent upon one another for foodstuffs, for vitally important raw materials, for markets, and for fields for the investment of their surplus capital. Thus all states are, in varying degree, bound intimately together. This is as true of those states which are now following policies looking toward economic self-sufficiency as it is of those that seek to engage actively in international exchanges. War, which severs state contacts and fundamentally disturbs the course of trade, has much more serious consequences to society today than it had a century ago. Consequently it has come to be considered as something to be avoided if possible. This, however, necessitates the development of satisfactory alternative methods to use in the settlement of disputes.

Furthermore, the controls accepted by the state have been

extended beyond the limits fixed in international law, inasmuch as the relations of states have been put on the basis of treaty agreements. Thus states have not only entered into treaties of alliance—which look in the direction of war even when they are cast in terms of purely defensive arrangements—but they have put more and more of their normal intercourse on the basis of agreement. The United States, to cite it as an example of what is generally true, has entered into commercial and consular conventions, into extradition treaties, into treaties restricting its freedom in the development of its armaments program (now no longer in force), and into arbitration and conciliation conventions, to mention only a few classes of cases. But, it must be noted, the extension of the rule of law through treaty negotiation depends upon the maintenance, as a primary working principle in international relations, of the view that the treaty establishes a binding obligation which must be observed or enforced rather than a mere temporary rule of convenience for the state.

### INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY

At this point the question may appropriately be raised as to the means used to bring into being such control of state activity on the basis of law as now exists, and through what agencies the existing controls have been applied and made to function. To answer this question we shall have to consider some of the more important types of international machinery which are now being utilized—some types newly created, others adaptations of machinery long in use.

#### Diplomatic and consular offices

The basic machinery for the carrying on of international relations is, of course, the foreign-relations part of the organization of the state itself. This organization, comprising that of the foreign office, and the diplomatic and the consular service, was described in Chapter 25. At this point, consequently, it is only necessary to point out that while this organization is indispensable, under existing conditions, to

the carrying on of international relations, it must be considered to be a necessary feature of national organization rather than an extension of national into international organization. While the diplomat is the medium for the conduct of political intercourse between his own government and that to which he is sent, and while the consul is concerned with the supervision and development of legal and trade relations between the two states, both are national and not international officers.

Both have, however, together with the foreign-office organization, maintained within the state a place of basic importance in the scheme of international organization, even though the offices are national. With every state maintaining diplomatic representation at the seat of government of every other state, and consular representation in every important commercial and industrial center, contact is maintained regularly and constantly between the members of the family of nations. These agencies serve to draw the nations together and encourage the development of a sense of community of interests. Points of view can be interchanged, and points of difference can be discussed and often adjusted in a friendly manner. It should be noted, however, that these ends can be attained only if the governments concerned are willing to settle their differences in a friendly manner, for, as a national officer, the diplomat receives his instructions from his government, through the medium of the foreign office or, as it is called in the United States, the Department of State. The head of this department, in turn, acts under the direction of the government which, in a democratic system, is supposed to be controlled by public opinion. Thus national opinion acts through the medium of the foreign service to control and direct the foreign relations of the state, and it is the conception of national rather than of international interest which finds an expression through the diplomatic and consular channels.

From the standpoint of organization the situation may be made clearer by drawing lines on a world map, running from Washington, D.C., to the capital of every recognized country. These lines can represent the diplomatic channels between this country and the other members of the family of nations.



Now if this same thing is done for every country, and if additional lines are drawn from every capital to every important port and commercial center, it will be readily seen what an intricate web has been woven to enable the requirements of modern society for international intercourse to be met through diplomatic and consular representation. Through these channels treaties are negotiated and put into operation, and through them conflicting interests are discussed and adjustments made.

### International conferences

A second type of machinery, which moves somewhat further toward an extension of national into international organization, is the international conference. This has been of great importance in the development of international controls. During the nineteenth century, it will be recalled, the practice began of holding international conferences to consider questions and problems of immediate concern to several states. These problems of general interest could be more satisfactorily considered in conference than through complicated separate negotiations involving a number of states. As the practice continued, the representation at international conferences was gradually broadened and conference functions were greatly extended. Consequently, their value for the adjustment of international difficulties steadily increased.

Fundamentally, international political conferences were justified during the nineteenth century, as already pointed out, on the basis of the Concert of Europe; that is, on the ground that the affairs of Europe had been composed and fixed by international agreement and that the Powers dictating the terms of a given treaty or convention must confer concerning their enforcement and observance. Thus there were "continuation" conferences following the conclusion of the Treaty of Vienna in 1815, as well as after the Conference at Paris in 1919. On the same principle, the Crimean war was brought to an end through a peace arrived at in an international conference broader in its composition than the belligerent states, and undertaking more than merely to arrive at

the terms of peace. Just as the Vienna Congress of 1815 laid down rules of international law, so the Paris Congress of 1856 attempted to exercise legislative powers for the international community. A third conference of this type was that at Berlin in 1878, when Russia was compelled to bring the terms of her treaty of peace with Turkey before a European conference for consideration and revision. A final example of this type of international conference, which possessed or assumed wider functions than those of a peace conference, was the Conference of Versailles, or Paris, called at the end of the World War.

### **International administrative organs**

Still another important kind of international conference is that called for the consideration of administrative questions involving postal, telegraphic, health, and similar matters. These conferences or congresses have resulted in the formation of the first truly international organs, the importance of which is not lessened because they are administrative in character. The first step toward the limiting of national control by the substitution of international control is almost invariably effected by international conferences. And the conference, if agreement is reached, results in the signing of an international convention embodying the terms of this agreement. The agreement may be on international standards to control the work of national administrative bodies, without any international organs of administration being established. Or provision may be made for a permanent administrative organ, usually called a "bureau," and for periodic congresses to revise the terms of the fundamental agreement or convention, and for conferences to revise the technical rules of the organization. It is not possible here to go into the question of international administration in any detail. But the nature of the development may be illustrated by reference to the International Postal Union and other similar international agencies.

Before 1874 each state was free to handle mails of foreign origin in any way that it saw fit, except as it had limited itself

through bilateral treaty agreements. It could set its own charges for handling them, while the routing of the mails was a difficult problem which had to be solved by the individual, who must consider both transportation facilities and varying charges. Thus there was a wide variation in the cost of sending a letter between two places, depending on just how, and through what countries, it was routed. If it had to go by steamer, and it missed a steamer, it could not be sent over an alternative route because of this factor of variable charges. Much inconvenience and undue expense resulted from this situation. Even after the inconvenience to business became overwhelming, states only very reluctantly moved toward a relaxation of their control of the mails. At first the attempt was made to overcome the difficulties involved by means of bilateral treaties. Movement by this means was, however, slow and cumbersome. Finally the pressure became so great that an international conference was held in 1863, and an agreement was reached in 1874 to create an organization for the sole purpose of solving the problem. The result was the establishment of the International Postal Union. This organization sets uniform charges and establishes regulations for the handling of mails of foreign origin, each state being bound to handle all such mails at rates internationally agreed upon, even though the ultimate destination is a third state. An International Bureau was established at Berne to do the administrative work involved in fixing rates, transmitting information from one national administration to another, and supervising the application of the agreement.

A little thought will reveal clearly the drastic character of this and similar innovations, so far as national sovereignty is concerned. The extent of the innovation is emphasized when it is remembered that the expenses of the organization are not borne equally by all of the members of the Union but are prorated among them on a fixed scale, also internationally agreed upon. This particular international agency has developed and entrenched itself because its usefulness has been so conclusively revealed. It is now so firmly established that there has even been a relaxation of the usual rule that there must be unani-



mous consent before changes can be made in the Convention; for in spite of the formal maintenance of the rule of unanimity for amendment of the Convention, it has been conclusively demonstrated that no state can prevent change in the face of a strong majority opinion that it should be made. Changes generally approved at a Postal Congress are, consequently, put into force without waiting for ratification by the states, on the assumption that it will be given. The alternative to acquiescence in the will of the majority is withdrawal from the Union and the loss of its benefits. These are so great that no state is willing to insist on having its own way at the expense of loss of membership.

In the field of the communication of intelligence, what was found to be necessary in relation to the posts, leading to the formation of the Postal Union, has also been found necessary in the case of telegraphic, cable, and radio-telegraphic communication. Thus the Telegraphic Union was established in 1865, and subsequently an international radio-telegraphy convention was signed. In the same way it has been found necessary to establish international rules for air navigation, with international organs to supervise their administration. It was also early found that the disease germ did not hesitate to cross national frontiers. Consequently, regional health councils were established, and the *Office International d'Hygiene Publique* came into being in 1903. Similarly, at a considerably earlier period, the need for international regulation of navigation on certain great river highways became evident. Thus the Rhine Commission was established in 1804, the Danube Commission in 1856; and there has been a steady tendency since that time to internationalize the control and use of international waterways. It is noticeable in all of these examples of the development of international administrative agencies that one feature is common to all: all have to do with forms of communication which could reach their maximum of usefulness only if all interested parties could participate in their control.

Many other instances might be added to illustrate the multiplying of international agencies. One of peculiar interest to

the United States is the Pan American Union, which performs a wide variety of useful work, fact-finding in the main. It also serves the needs of the periodic conferences of American states, held approximately every four years, as well as the special conferences called from time to time to consider particular problems. These conferences consider a wide range of subjects, including the codification of international public and private law, arbitration, customs formalities, sanitary arrangements, and the like, and thus promote Pan-American friendship through coöperation in the solution of common problems.

### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The development of international administrative machinery and the application of the conference method to an increasing variety of problems during the nineteenth century have proved their value in the promotion of international coöperation. With the establishment of the League of Nations in 1920 the usefulness of both of these international mechanisms has been extended and improved.

The prewar attempt to solve certain problems of international relations through the development of administrative coöperation on the international level pointed the way to the most fruitful activities of the League. The Preamble to the Covenant of the League describes one of the League's purposes to be that of promoting international coöperation. Article 23 marks out, as tasks to be assumed: (a) the improvement of the conditions of labor for men, women, and children in all countries; (b) the securing of just treatment for the natives in colonial territories; (c) the supervision of the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children, and also the traffic in dangerous drugs; (d) the supervision of the international trade in arms; (e) the securing of greater freedom of communications; (f) the establishment of a more effective control of disease. Article 24 provides that existing international administrative organizations shall be centralized under the general organs of the League, provided the members of such organizations give their consent. It further provides

that the administrative activities thereafter created shall be placed under League direction. Thus it is evident that an expansion as well as a coördination of international administration was expected to follow the establishment of the League.

The expected complete coördination of existing agencies did not follow, mainly because the League did not include in its membership all important states; the United States, notably, refused to join the League. Some of the nonmembers of the League who were members of existing organizations refused to have these organizations brought under League supervision. Some organizations, however, such as the Health Organization, were paralleled by League organizations and with these they were brought into coöperation. Thus world health activities have expanded tremendously under the auspices of the League through a coördination of its services with those of the older organization. The League has also brought into being a technical Communications and Transit Organization and a Financial and Economic Organization. Working mainly through the latter, the League undertook successfully the task of financial reorganization of Austria and of Hungary in 1922-1923, and later, at the invitation of the government of China, it extended technical advice and aid to that country in working out a program of internal economic reconstruction. Through the Central Opium Committee and through the Secretariat—which is the administrative, or civil-service branch of the League organization—the administrative work growing out of the attempt to control the trade in opium and its derivatives and other dangerous narcotics has been performed. Similarly, through the Secretariat, a constant supervision of the international traffic in women and children has been attempted.

New administrative activities, such as those just mentioned and numerous others, have their inception under League auspices, just as previously, through resort to conference. The two political organs of the League, the Council and the Assembly, are really permanent diplomatic conferences. Out of the discussion at either Council or Assembly meetings may come the perception of the need for an attack on some particular problem of international relations. This has frequently



led to the proposal of a special conference which, when held, may include in its membership nonmembers as well as members of the League. This conference may then agree on the terms of a treaty which, if ratified, may have the effect of setting up standards or establishing controls for the states. It may also provide for machinery to supervise the application of the agreement. Thus the Communications and Transit Organization resulted from the holding of a Conference at Barcelona, and the Economic and Financial Organization was initiated at the request of a conference held at Brussels. The opium problem has been tackled at a series of conferences held under the auspices of the League. The preliminary work for the Hague Conference on the codification of international law was done at Geneva, the seat of the League, through the Secretariat; and the conference itself was called by the League.

In the light of these League activities it is fair to conclude that the resort to conference for the purpose of promoting international coöperation has been stimulated as a result of the creation of the League. It is equally true that international administrative activity has been accelerated for the same reason. The mechanics of conference have been improved through the creation of a permanent conference organization, supported by a permanent civil service. The latter has further supplied a mechanism through which agreements entered into can be administered and activities planned by separate conferences coördinated and systematized. On this basis, whether or not it has been a complete failure in other directions, the League has become an indispensable organization.

### THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION

Another important international institution created at the same time as the League of Nations and designed to promote a certain form of international coöperation is the International Labor Organization. In its inception those who were responsible for the creation of the Labor Organization had in mind the fact that many labor problems are international in character, and that they at times have a direct bearing upon

international good will. In addition there were the needs of organized labor throughout the world to consider, at a time when triumphant Russian communism was reaching out beckoning hands to the workers of Europe.

Organized labor had long recognized that one of the difficulties of establishing and maintaining a satisfactory standard of life had its source in the wide variations in working conditions, hours, and wages in different countries. Under a competitive system, low standards in one country tended to pull down standards in another where conditions were more favorable. Sincere good will and sympathy were difficult to maintain between the working populations of nations where widely divergent standards prevailed. Thus, in the interest of amity and in the interest of better living conditions, organized labor sought to "level up" standards where they were low.

Such was one of the important aims of the socialist wings of the working class when, in 1864, they established what is called The International, an organization which, beginning with a few nations, so extended its influence as to include labor groups in almost every nation during the first decade of the twentieth century. So far as this particular aim is concerned, the significant fact is that what labor sought to do by means of The International, which was completely separated from governments, is now being done, among other things, by the International Labor Organization, whose business it is to investigate labor conditions throughout the world and to promote agreement among the states, looking toward a progressive improvement of those conditions.

The International Labor Organization is closely related to the League of Nations, but it has its own constitutional foundation in a charter set forth in the Treaty of Versailles. The organization consists of three bodies: a Conference, a Governing Body, and a Labor Office. The Labor Office is a permanent administrative organization corresponding to the Secretariat of the League of Nations. The Conference, which meets annually, is unusually interesting among international organizations because it is not exclusively composed of state representatives. Its membership consists of three classes of

## CHART VIII. ORGANIZATION OF THE LEAGUE SYSTEM<sup>1</sup>

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### The Covenant THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

#### *Assembly*

Not more than three representatives chosen by each member state; each state one vote.

#### *Council*

Fifteen members; four permanent, eleven elected by the Assembly.

#### *Secretariat*

Organized into fifteen sections.

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### AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

1. Economic and Financial Organization
  2. Communication and Transit Organization
  3. Health Organization
  4. Intellectual Coöperation Organization
  5. Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval, and Air Questions
  6. Permanent Mandates Commission
  7. Commission for Enquiry for European Union
  8. Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People
  - 9a. Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs
  - 9b. Permanent Central Opium Board
  - 9c. Supervisory Body
  10. Supervisory Commission
  11. Committee on the Allocation of Expenses
  12. Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery
- 

### INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION

#### *Charter*

#### *Conference*

Member states (62); each with 4 government, 2 employers', and 2 labor representatives.

#### *Governing Body*

Thirty-two members: 16 government, 8 labor, and 8 employers' representatives.

#### *International Labor Office*

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#### *Statute*

### PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

Fifteen judges chosen by the Council and the Assembly from nominees of the Hague Court of Arbitration.

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<sup>1</sup>Adapted from chart in *Essential Facts about the League of Nations*, Geneva, 1937.



representatives: (1) a government-appointed delegation of two members from each state; (2) one representative nominated by the organized workers of each state; and (3) one representative nominated by the employers; the last two, it should be noted, receive official appointment from the government. Since the members vote as individuals, rather than as delegations, the Conference, as a rule, finds itself divided into three groups. Another interesting and significant provision in the working of the Labor Organization is that conventions (or treaty agreements) may be accepted by majority vote of the Conference and presented to the state governments for their ratification, without which no conventions can become effective.

The Labor Organization and the League of Nations are related through various ties, and the work of the Labor Organization is interwoven at numerous points with that of the League. Nevertheless, the Labor Organization must be considered as an autonomous rather than as a subordinate organization. Its status in this respect is closely comparable to that of the Permanent Court of International Justice. It is this autonomy which made it possible for the United States, by resolution of Congress, to accept membership in the Labor Organization in 1934 without thereby compromising its policy of nonmembership in the League. Thus the Labor Organization is the only one of the major postwar international organizations which the United States has joined. It has refused to accept membership either in the League or in the Permanent Court of International Justice; nevertheless, it has gone a considerable distance in coöperating with the League of Nations in certain aspects of its work without joining it.

### THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

The establishment of international order does not follow automatically from the creation of law, whether by custom, by diplomatic negotiation, or by conference. Nor does it follow from administrative coöperation in the handling of common tasks. These lay the basis for an orderly conduct of interna-

tional relations. But just as national law has to be interpreted and applied and disputes arising under its provisions adjusted, so international law has to be given peaceful application in the event of divergence of interpretation of right under the law. Furthermore, there is the problem of enforcement of it on possible violators. An additional complication comes from the fact that international disputes arising outside the scope of the law, in unregulated fields of policy, must be settled by one means or another. In short, the problem of devising and bringing into use methods of accomplishing settlement of international disputes peacefully instead of by resort to war is just as important a part of the problem of establishing international order as is the extension of the rules of law. The search for such methods led finally to the establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice. As a product of historical development the World Court can be best understood if we look into preceding achievements.

#### **Arbitration as a means of peaceful settlement**

Reference has been made at another place<sup>1</sup> to the use of arbitration by the Greeks. This peaceful method of settlement was revived for use in the modern world when provision was made for it in the Jay Treaty of 1794 between the United States and England. It came to be more and more frequently provided for in treaties during the nineteenth century, so that by 1899, when the first Hague Conference met, it had become a recognized international procedure. It was only with The Hague Conferences, however, that its use was systematized and provided for by a general international agreement.

Arbitration, employed as a method of settlement of international disputes, has one thing in common with the judicial method of settlement of disputes employed within the state. States which agree to arbitrate agree to accept and put into effect the decision (award) of the arbitrators. It differs from the national judicial process, however, in that it involves the setting up of a special tribunal to hear each case and a special agreement to submit the case to arbitration. Thus, before

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 754 f.

there can be an arbitration the disputing states have to reach an agreement on the personnel of the tribunal and also on the conditions of its work, such as the law to be applied or the rules of evidence to be followed. Such agreements are difficult to reach since each state seeks to have the arbitration planned so as to insure, as nearly as possible, a decision favorable to it.

A principal task of the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 was to make resort to arbitration easier and more certain. The conventions (agreements) adopted at those Conferences attempted to promote arbitration in several ways. In the first place, the signatory states agreed to regard it as a suitable procedure for the settlement of certain types of disputes and to employ it whenever possible. In the second place, a move toward the establishment of a court was made with the creation of The Hague Court of Arbitration. This was not a real court since it was only a list of names of individuals who possessed suitable qualification for service as arbitrators. Each signatory state listed the names of not more than four of its nationals who were trained as jurists and were of high character and attainments. From this list disputing states might, by agreement, select members of an arbitral tribunal to decide their dispute with some assurance that the decision would be made objectively and on the basis of respect for law. In the third place, a regular procedure for the selecting of arbitrators from this list, or outside it, which would insure the final constitution of a tribunal, was agreed upon. In this procedure, especially as it was revised at the second Hague Conference, emphasis was placed upon reducing national influence within the tribunal, thus making it a more impartial body.

After 1899 a movement, stimulated by the Hague Conferences, set in to create fixed obligations to arbitrate certain types of dispute through the negotiation of bilateral treaties. Such treaties as were concluded, however, were put in such general terms or were so hedged about by general limitations that they did not really accomplish that purpose. An agreement to arbitrate disputes arising under the general principles of international law or treaty agreements, for example, would be weakened by a provision excepting questions involving the national



honor or vital interests of the state or other such inexact and undefinable matters.

### **Establishment of the World Court**

Nevertheless, by the time of the World War, it had come to be accepted that certain types of disputes could properly be arbitrated. Such types were to be found in disputes in which legal principles or treaty provisions could be applied and in disputes which turned on differences over questions of fact that could be objectively ascertained. What was lacking, it was felt, was a court to which the states could, as a matter of course, take such disputes. Consequently, when the Covenant of the League was drafted, one of its articles provided that the members would submit their disputes to arbitration or to judicial settlement when a court had been established. Another article made it mandatory on the Council of the League to take the steps necessary to bring a real court into being. In fulfillment of this obligation the Council established a Commission of Jurists which, meeting at The Hague, drafted the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice (1920).

As originally constituted the Court consisted of eleven judges and four deputy judges. The number of judges has since been increased to fifteen. All are elected to serve for a period of nine years by majority vote of the Council and Assembly of the League. These bodies, meeting separately but simultaneously, make their selections from nominees proposed by the states signatory to The Hague Convention of 1907 through their respective groups of representatives on the Hague Court of Arbitration. Thus the new institution is linked with the old.

The Permanent Court, which meets at The Hague, is empowered to sit either as a court of arbitration or a court of law, and to hear and decide any cases brought before it by agreement of the states parties to the dispute. Those states, however, which accept membership in the court may confer on it the power to determine its own jurisdiction by accepting what is called the Optional Clause of the Statute. This means

that they may be sued by another state, which has itself accepted the Optional Clause, and they may not prevent the hearing of the case by asserting that the Court has no jurisdiction to hear and decide it. The Court itself is empowered to make that decision. But those states which have accepted this compulsory jurisdiction of the Court have done so only with respect to clearly defined classes of disputes. These, as set forth in Article 36 of the Statute, are "legal disputes concerning: (a) the interpretation of a treaty; (b) any question of international law; (c) the existence of any fact, which, if established, would constitute a breach of an international obligation; (d) the nature or extent of the reparation to be made for the breach of an international obligation." As stated, if one state alleges and the other denies that the dispute falls within one of the above-mentioned classes, the Court itself makes the decision and thus determines whether or not it has jurisdiction. More than forty members of the Court have accepted the Optional Clause, subject to a variety of reservations.

In addition to its right to hear cases brought before it by agreement of disputing states, the Court is empowered to render advisory opinions on legal questions at the request of the League Council. This enables the Council to make use of it in performing its own duties, especially in the attempt to settle disputes brought before it which may require an authoritative decision of legal issues to clear the way for a political settlement. The advisory opinion has also been sought by states engaged in controversy, the request being made through the Council. This procedure has enabled states to settle disputes without incurring the costs and encountering the delays involved in litigation before a court.

That there was need for a permanent international court, and that the present Court has satisfactorily met this need is indicated in the fact that twenty-three cases have been brought before it for judgment and a still larger number of advisory opinions have been rendered by it. Its progress thus far has heartened those who still look forward to an ultimate realization of the rule of law in international life.

### **The function of arbitration and of conciliation**

It must not be concluded that the establishment of the Permanent Court has resulted in a displacement of the older procedure of arbitration through special tribunals constituted to hear particular cases, or set up more permanently by two states to decide cases arising in their relations. Many arbitration treaties specifying the use of special tribunals other than the Permanent Court remain in operation. Some of them date from prewar days, but many of the most important of them have been brought into force since the establishment of the Court. Thus the states continue to find arbitration useful even though they also belong to and utilize the Permanent Court. The latter is developing distinctly as a court of justice, comparable to national courts, rather than as a court of arbitration. Both the judicial and arbitral processes involve judgment and final decision, but the latter may be used more flexibly than the former and offers the possibility of settlement of disputes which are not strictly and exclusively legal or judicial in character.

Through provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations and also of the Pact of Paris (most generally called the Briand-Kellogg Pact), signed in 1928, an obligation was established for the signatories to settle legal disputes either through arbitration or through the judgment of the Permanent Court. But many of the most important international disputes cannot be settled through the "third-party" judgment of a court or an arbitral tribunal. They involve conflicts of policy which have to be adjusted on a give-and-take basis rather than settled by a decision in favor of one and against another of the disputants. There is no objective basis of judgment, since they occur in fields of relationship where the law has not penetrated. Consequently, if war is to be avoided, it is necessary to establish some means of peaceful adjustment of disputes growing out of the policies of states, that is, of political disputes. Within the field of state control of policy there may be a difference between two states because of a dispute as to the facts themselves as well as because of divergence



of policy. For this type of dispute the Hague Conferences made provision for the use of (1) "Good Offices," or the tender of its services as a channel of communication by a third state, when diplomatic relations between the disputants have been broken off; (2) "Mediation," or the attempt, with the approval of the disputants, of a third state to find a basis of settlement of the dispute for them; and (3) "Inquiry," which involves the constitution of a fact-finding commission to present the disputants with an authoritative statement of the facts in dispute. Out of the last mentioned grew the procedure of conciliation. This involves investigation into the facts in dispute and also the making of proposals for its settlement. But these proposals are recommendations which are not binding on the disputants as is the award of an arbitral tribunal or the judgment of the Permanent Court.

#### **The League's concern with international peace**

Conciliation is really a procedure for the pacific settlement of disputes developed during and after the World War. It was forecast in its basic idea in treaties entered into by the United States with some eighteen countries during the years after 1912, when Mr. Bryan, from whom the treaties took their name, was Secretary of State. This idea was that war might be averted if there was immediate fact-finding by a permanent commission set up in advance, and a period for "cooling-off" while the facts were being ascertained, and for a period after the report of the commission had been made. With the establishment of the League this idea was seized upon and written into Article 15 of the Covenant. Coupled with other articles, the obligation was established for member states not to resort to war until after there had been either arbitration or court judgment of the legal and nonpolitical type of dispute, or conciliation either through a commission set up by agreement of the disputants or through the Council of the League. An important additional change made with the establishment of the League was incorporated in Article 11. This was the provision that any war or threat of war was a matter of concern to the League members, which the Council might undertake

to consider. Thus what had hitherto been a matter of exclusive concern to the disputing states became a matter of international concern.

A number of important disputes were settled by Council action as they arose during the first decade of existence of the League. After 1930, however, more reverses than successes will be found in the League record. A dispute threatening war between Brazil and Colombia, called the Leticia dispute from the area involved, was successfully settled. The Council and also the interested American states found greater difficulty in bringing about a final settlement of the dispute between Paraguay and Bolivia over the area known as the Gran Chaco. Hostilities were carried on, in fact, between the two states for a long time before an armistice was finally effected. A still longer time passed before the two states finally agreed on the terms of a final settlement. Of larger world importance was the Chinese-Japanese dispute over Manchuria which arose in 1931. The attempts made by the Council and the Assembly, supported by the United States, to find a basis of settlement were completely unsuccessful. The policy produced by the United States of nonrecognition of changes made in violation of the Kellogg Pact and the League Covenant was adopted by the League Assembly and has since been largely followed. But Manchuria was detached from China and erected into what is nominally an independent state, but which actually is a dependency of Japan. Subsequently the League organs were not able to prevent the annexation of Ethiopia, a League member, to Italy, also a member of the League. And the League organs made no real attempts to deal with the problem of the Spanish Civil War, the Japanese invasion of China in and after 1937, or the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938-1939.

### THE RETURN TO PREWAR CONCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES

These failures indicate that the preservation of peace depends upon more than the perfection of procedures for the pacific settlement of international disputes. It depends upon the enforced utilization of these procedures. Otherwise, the more powerful states will continue to enforce their own terms

of settlement on the weaker ones when they see fit to do so. This danger was perceived by the framers of the Covenant, but was lost sight of during the first decade of existence of the League. In the establishment of that organization the attempt was made to transfer from the state to the society of states the responsibility for the maintenance of the independence and the territorial integrity of the member states. The principle of nonaggression was written into Article 10 of the Covenant, in the form of a pledge to respect the independence and integrity of the member states. The principle of collective action was added in the acceptance of the obligation to preserve as against external aggression that independence and integrity. The method of collective action to fulfill the pledge, and also to enforce the accepted obligation to settle disputes by pacific means was set forth in general terms in Article 16, the so-called *sanctions* article, of the Covenant.

But, during the first decade of the existence of the League, the point of view came to be accepted that no further supports for the collective system were needed than those to be found in the willingness of states to fulfill their obligations voluntarily and as a matter of good faith, and in the coercive power of public opinion. Consequently, while Article 16 remained in the Covenant, no steps were taken to work out the method of its actual application in case of necessity, nor was an assurance given that there would be decisive action against the aggressor or the violator of the League Covenant. Neither economic nor military sanctions were applied or attempted against Japan in 1931, nor was there a willingness shown by the governments to apply full and drastic sanctions against Italy in 1935 when Ethiopia was invaded. Consequently the League as an agency to preserve the peace has fallen into disrepute, and states have been thrown back on their own national power for purposes of self-defense. Under these circumstances there has been a reversion to the methods of politics of the years before the World War, with the development of the same instability of relationship and the same form of disorder that mark the relationship of states when carried on exclusively in terms of power.



The circumstances under which the League came into existence and the persistence of traditional attitudes toward statecraft throw further light on the failure of the League to function successfully. The League system was associated necessarily with the maintenance of a *status quo* established by war and a dictated peace. From the beginning this situation weakened the League, which finally broke down under the impact of the policies of states dissatisfied with that *status quo*. It was also weakened even more fundamentally, because, despite the new orientation given to international practices by the League system, statesmen continued to hold to the traditional view that the basis of international politics was laid in the power of the separate states. In other words, while professing belief in the system of collective action to provide security for the individual state, the governments of all states continued to interest themselves in developing national power as the most effective means of promoting national interests and of establishing the security of the state.

Thus the major preoccupation has continued to be with national power rather than with concerted endeavor to establish peace and advance the interests of international society. And from this preoccupation again have come alliance and counteralliance looking toward war or, what is the same thing, toward defense against attack. Postwar alliances established French hegemony on the European continent. As long as this existed the possibility of general war was reduced to a minimum. But those adversely affected by French dominance sought to increase their strength to the point where they could challenge it. Thus, after 1931, a movement in the field of power relationships, assertedly to re-establish a balance of power, set in. This was tacitly encouraged by England, the traditional exponent of the principle as she alternately supported France and Germany against one another.<sup>1</sup> This reversion has led to a revived belief in the efficacy of the balance-of-power con-

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<sup>1</sup>A change in England's policy dates from March 1939. At the present time of writing England is apparently engaged in building up a coalition against the Nazi-controlled German government, while at the same time engaging in her own rearmament.

ception to preserve the peace, which has further served to weaken support of the League system. Exponents of the balance principle now as previously hold to the belief that the policy of the state, in its concern with power, is directed toward the creation of an actual equilibrium, or balance, and that, given the creation of an equilibrium, effort to increase the power of the state beyond that point will cease. In fact, concern with power continues because it is realized that the ends of the state cannot be attained unless it has sufficient strength to overcome opposition. This requires not a balance but a superiority of power. Consequently, the present reversion to the balance-of-power principle involves a competitive struggle for superiority and ultimately war to establish the fact of that superiority, and through it to attain the ends of national policy for which superiority of power is sought. Power-politics and war cannot be dissociated.

The demoralization of international life has been further greatly aggravated by the emergence of dictatorships since the World War. Attention has been directed to the remarkable development of international law and the increase in treaty agreements in the years immediately following the War, a development that seemed to promise a more orderly international life in the not distant future.<sup>1</sup>

Events of the immediate past, however, make it necessary to raise a question as to whether a countercurrent has not set in which may not only serve to reverse the current but may also remove the very foundation of the international legal order. Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany have revived and strengthened the idea that the state is, by its very nature, above and beyond the control of law. Accepted rules of international law as well as treaty obligations have been construed as rules of convenience or expediency, to be observed so long as they serve the purposes of the state but to be disregarded when observance becomes inconvenient or inexpedient. If this point of view should win wide acceptance it would inevitably mean that the restraints on the state would be narrowed rather than extended, and that such restraints as were accepted would,

<sup>1</sup>See p. 806.

by definition, be conceived of as temporary rather than permanent obligations. Thus the stability of international relationships on the basis of the binding obligations of law would be replaced by the instability resulting from the constant, uncontrolled fluctuations of state policy. In the light of these developments, a fair conclusion at this time (1939) would be that although the number of rules embodied in international law or in treaties has been increased, the force of the principle of law in international relations has been weakened.

The currents of thought and action presented in the preceding paragraphs point unmistakably to the view that the international order founded on the League of Nations system has been seriously undermined, if not destroyed, and that the movement is now backward to the conceptions and practices of the prewar period. Striking evidence of this reversion is to be found in the intense and uncontrolled competition in armament, similar to that of the years from 1900 to 1914, which began in and after 1935. Land, sea, and air forces, and their equipment began to be rapidly increased by Germany, Italy, Japan, France, England, Russia, the United States, and less important nations, against the time of a general war. A race in armament is the invariable concomitant of disorderly and unregulated international relations, since armament is a function of politics. If disputes are not to be settled by orderly, pacific procedures, they will ultimately be settled by war. War, or its possibility, brings about concern with the instruments for waging it. Experience shows that if it is averted it is because a preponderance of power is arrayed against those whose policies would lead to attack on others. Thus those whose purposes are peaceful rather than aggressive have to concern themselves with power and its instruments just as do the non-pacific states.

The trend of events seems to warrant the prediction that those states whose interests are identified with the establishment and the maintenance of an orderly international society may ultimately find it necessary to act collectively to create a decisive preponderance of power—designed to accomplish, not the particular ends of *national* policy, but the broader



*international* end of preserving peace through the enforced settlement of disputes and rivalries between nations by such pacific means as arbitration and conciliation.

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## THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION

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**W**E ARE NOT CONSULTED about our birth. We do not choose our parents, or their position in life, or their place of residence, or the state of their health, or the kind of society of which they make us members. We have to take these things as we find them; we have to take life as we find it, and try to make the best of it. We cannot alter our height, or the color of our eyes, or the extent of our intelligence; we cannot live without food and shelter; we may die tomorrow, or fifty years from tomorrow, but we cannot know when, nor can we prolong life beyond a brief span, nor is it entirely within our power to prolong it beyond the present moment. We find the world indifferent to our concerns, if not radically unjust. A wise Frenchman has written: "The things we most desire never happen, or if they happen, it is neither at the time nor under the circumstances when they would have given most pleasure." We want the world's prizes; those who get them want something else. We cannot command the enduring gratitude of men, or preëminent success, or perfect happiness. These are gifts, bestowed upon a few, for reasons often beyond our understanding.

We are, in short, though capable of doing much for ourselves, never capable of doing enough. For we are "cribbed, cabined, and confined" within a round of existence which we



did not plan, which we would not choose, and which we cannot alter. We are prisoners—some of us blind prisoners, unable even to see the bars; we are creatures, not creators, save of trifles; we are, thought Shakespeare, “such stuff as dreams are made on.” Man is, thought a Greek poet, less than that—he is “but a dream of a shadow.” Yet perhaps no writers have done more than Shakespeare and Pindar to bring home to us the high worth and dignity which human life may have, even under tragic conditions, and the grandeur of man “when the sun shines upon him.” “Man is but a reed, weakest in nature,” wrote Pascal, “but a reed which thinks. It needs not that the whole Universe should arm to crush him. A vapor, a drop of water, is enough to kill him. But were the Universe to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which has slain him, because he knows that he dies, and that the Universe has the better of him. The Universe knows nothing of this.”

The paradoxical union of opposites thus illustrated by Pascal—greatness and littleness somehow joined within man’s nature—is the ultimate yet familiar mystery from which religion springs. And religion endures through all vicissitudes, all changes, in human society, because no changes, no developments of culture, no advances in knowledge, no increasing complexities of life, alter this fundamental paradox which constitutes human nature as we know it in history and in experience.

### WHAT IS RELIGION?

In an earlier chapter of this work<sup>1</sup> it is said that there are “hundreds of so-called ‘primitive’ religions, and thousands of variations among the major religions themselves.” The fact has been a source of trouble not only to many religious people, but to students. As early as the first half of the seventeenth century, Lord Herbert of Cherbury in effect inaugurated the comparative study of religions when he suggested that there were certain notions or beliefs present as identical elements in all religions. He was confident that he had discovered what these notions were, and drew the logical conclusion that there

<sup>1</sup>See p. 20.

was one true religion, everywhere the same, which had been overlaid or corrupted at different times and in different places by varying interpretations, usages, and unessential added features. It was soon shown that Lord Herbert was mistaken in thinking he had discovered the universal religion of mankind; but the effort to discover it continued, flourishing especially during the later years of the nineteenth century, and resulting in a number of definitions for which universal validity has been claimed.

The method followed has been, of necessity, that suggested by Lord Herbert's premature generalization. Religions early and late, simple and complex, lower and higher, have been compared with each other, and elements not common to all of them have been discarded, until some belief, or usage, or attitude has been found which forms a part of every known religion. It is a process of squeezing, or of scaling down religions to their lowest common denominator. The outcome may be illustrated by several examples. The great anthropologist, E. B. Tylor, concluded that religion is "the belief in spiritual beings." Marie-Jean Guyau has defined it as "a universal sociomorphism. The religious sense is the sense of dependence in relation to wills which primitive man places in the universe." M. Salomon Reinach presents religion as "a sum of scruples which impede the free exercise of our faculties." M. Emile Durkheim defines it thus: "The phenomena which we call religious are those which consist in obligatory beliefs connected with definite practices relating to objects given in these beliefs." Professor Robert H. Lowie defines it as "a universal feature of human culture, not because all societies foster a belief in spirits, but because all recognize in some form or other awe-inspiring, extraordinary manifestations of reality."

These, we must remember, are *minimum* definitions. They do not profess to be adequate for any single given religion; yet whether they serve any useful purpose, beyond demonstrating conclusively the extreme difficulty of finding an element common to all religions, is open to question. Moreover, M. Reinach's definition is illustrative of a whole group which

might be cited, requiring on the part of the reader the knowledge which those definitions are supposed to give; for this famous definition cannot refer to all scruples, but only to a particular kind—to specifically *religious* scruples. And this of course means that practically M. Reinach contents himself with saying, "Religion is religion." The definition given in the *New English Dictionary* is as follows: "Recognition on the part of man of some higher unseen power as having control of his destiny, and as being entitled to obedience, reverence, and worship; the general mental and moral attitude resulting from this belief, with reference to its effect upon the individual or the community; personal or general acceptance of this feeling as a standard of spiritual and practical life." This, though it is very guarded, is not circular, and it sheds more light on the subject than any of the definitions given above. Nevertheless, it could not be accepted by students of comparative religion, because it can hardly be stretched to cover all the known kinds.

There is a reason for this special difficulty—not encountered to the same extent in the study of the other institutions of society—but we cannot understand either the diversity of religions, or the force behind them, or the place they fill in the social structure, until we turn to consider their origin and the way in which they can be said to have developed.

## RELIGIOUS ORIGINS

### **Man a creature of infinite wants**

We may best understand the starting point and fundamental nature of religion by considering certain basic facts about ourselves. As has already been said, we do not make ourselves or the world in which we live. But we are not simply the creatures of heredity and environment. We can think and act. We are sources of *power*, and can to some extent deliberately direct our expenditure of power. We have, moreover, like other animals, certain elemental desires or impulses—the impulse to self-preservation, the impulse to propagate our kind. And as a general rule we are not satisfied merely with self-preservation. We want something better than bare existence,



and direct our energies to the improvement of our lives in so far as we can think of appropriate and practicable means or, in other words, channels for the expenditure of available power. We can thus to some extent remake both ourselves and our environment, in accordance with our judgment as to what is "better." Our elemental impulses, furthermore, are capable of an indefinite expansion by subdivision, and refinement, and even transmutation.

We require, for example, food in order to live; but who is content with simply anything that is edible and sustaining? Volumes could be written upon the development of this demand of our natures, as fortunes are spent in satisfying it in accordance with cultivated taste. Again, who is content with just anybody—the nearest male or female—in relations which have their basis in sex? Cats seem to be thus content, as well as certain other mammals and perhaps all animals of relatively very simple structure. But between these animals and ourselves there is a gulf, formed by a process of progressive refinement, and so deep and wide that no human being can cross it, even if in certain moments some of us fancy we wish to. Moreover, to return to self-preservation, the value which may come to be set upon the "self" may be such that, for any one of a considerable number of reasons, we may decide to risk or even to forfeit our lives rather than subject the "self" to indignity. Thousands of men and women have thus died for convictions which they have held to be more precious than their own individual existence, and perhaps as many more because it seemed intolerably shameful to admit to their fellows that they did not have qualities or convictions thought to be essential in "good" citizens.

Thus has the impulse to propagation been developed and refined, and the impulse to self-preservation been not only developed and refined, but transmuted. It is useless to dogmatize concerning the limits of this process. There are limits, however, beyond which change is not development, but merely change—which, of course, is valued by some kinds of people for its own sake. Many seem to imagine that the simple multiplication of man's needs, and of the means to satisfy them

somehow or other, is a new kind of evolutionary progress. To what extent this multiplication may properly be termed a "progress" we need not decide; as regards man himself, however, it seems to be now an accepted fact that his physical and mental characteristics have not *essentially* changed during probably the last 30,000 years. And it is equally well established that whenever a stationary point is reached in the evolution of organisms, that point is also a limit, beyond which no further development is possible. It remains a fact, too, that the fundamental conditions of life, such as those mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, do not change. In particular, whatever men may attempt, whatever they may accomplish, all are swallowed up in death by the system of things, after a brief period of existence. And during life men are never at ease. Impelled continually to aim at something "better," which is often partially but never fully attained, men find life a continuous struggle, or series of struggles, because forces both within and without them oppose change and resist the effort to obtain mastery over them for human purposes.

#### **Religion a means of satisfying human wants**

Consequently whatever knowledge of the system of things men secure, through hard experience, is of inestimable value to them. It is something to be treasured up; it is a rock of safety in a marshy land, an oasis in a desert, a guiding star shining above the wide ocean; it must be preserved at all costs and passed on to the next generation. Such knowledge we call by the general names, science and philosophy. It is the fruit of experience. But experience is not all of one kind. It may be gained by deliberate and planned experimentation; it may be gained casually, by unplanned trial and error; or it may *crystallize*, as it were, in a sudden, inexplicable flash of illumination. This mysterious crystallization is by no means uncommon. It has occurred in every age of which we know anything, though it takes many differing forms, and varies greatly, from one instance to another, in suddenness, intensity, and what may be called availability—or the ease with which it may be translated into intelligible speech. It is, of course, difficult to

describe. Plato has told how Socrates, in the midst of his effort to learn whether or not he was really wiser than other men, was baffled by the poets. Their words might be wisdom, but they themselves seemed to know less than their auditors what they meant, and could not explain whence their wisdom came nor how. They were, as we evasively say, "inspired." But the thing we most definitely know about "inspiration" is that the more deliberately it is sought, the less likely is it to be found. Again, as we know from many accounts, men have often been in the utmost difficulty when confronted by a genuine problem—and a genuine problem is always an unexpected, surprising problem—and they have been driven to their wits' end until finally, without apparent progress having been made towards the solution, they have been overtaken by the sleep of exhaustion—when, upon awaking, they have seen before them, clear, unmistakable, and complete, the answer they had vainly sought. Psychologists offer explanations of this phenomenon, but only through lame analogies whose pertinence is dubious. It is best to admit that it is something beyond the range of our ordinary views. For this very reason it has often been distrusted, and it does need to be regarded skeptically; nevertheless, the race owes an incalculable debt to its "inspired" men.

Crystallization, as we may continue to call it, could be variously and almost endlessly illustrated, but the two examples just presented should suffice to show the kind of thing it is. And from it springs religion. The knowledge which is thus communicated or revealed to man forms a part of his science and philosophy, but this knowledge is often set apart, because it is believed to be peculiarly precious—crucial to human welfare—and because it is believed to come directly from a supernatural source, and to demonstrate the existence of a favorable relationship between man and the supernatural powers, or power, or force, or whatever is supernatural. When this occurs, it seems as important to preserve the relationship as the knowledge communicated, and to both ends appropriate action is required of man, in addition to the course of action required by new knowledge. The consequence is what we can recognize as religion. Definite beliefs, considered to be true beyond



doubt, are essential to it, but do not of themselves constitute it. Beliefs originating in extraordinary experience must flow out into an appropriate way of life—and when they do so we are in the presence of religion.

### Diversities in religions

We have been trying, it must be remembered, to discover the starting point of religion, and to get some light on its fundamental nature. The account just given is necessarily abstract. We may now notice, however, that it leaves room for all the diversities which have been observed in the religions of the world, past and present. And it should, in addition, help us to understand these diversities. For if religious belief has its basis in man's experience, it evidently must take forms suggested by that experience. We can, in general, understand something only in so far as we can relate it to what we already know. The same statement made to a child of ten, to a youth of fifteen, and to a man of thirty, is likely to be understood in a different way by each—and in a still different way if made to a person just beginning to learn our language. The same statement made to an American farmer, to an Eskimo, to a Peruvian Indian, and to a London banker, is likely to be understood in a different way by each. The mere fact that a message comes, or is believed to come, from a supernatural realm is itself of considerable importance, as will presently be explained. But there is always the question—a very practical and insistent question—how it is to be understood. And it will be understood, it *can* be understood, only in terms of the experience, the ways of life, the conscious needs, the values, of the people who receive it. Hence, from the very nature of the case, there are bound to be as many religions, and as many varying religious usages, as there are different peoples, living under differing conditions, and at different stages of development, in the several portions of the earth. As soon as we begin really to think about the matter, it is impossible to imagine how it could be otherwise. It is a fact having the same significance—no more, no less—as the similar variations to be found in the sphere of education, and in that of “science and philosophy.”

## RELIGION AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

**Has religion lost its vitality?**

Looked at externally, in the light of what has just been said, religion sometimes seems to be no more than an instrument—of high efficacy under some conditions—for preserving and transmitting cultures and for holding communities together. In highly developed and complex societies, moreover, many of the offices performed under simpler conditions of life by religion are separated off and taken over by other institutions—by the secular state, for example, and by educational agencies, and organizations for scientific investigation. In these circumstances it is sometimes felt by “emancipated” people that religion serves no useful purpose, but is merely a species of delusion somehow set on foot and maintained for their own profit by priests—who are alleged to be really charlatans.

Both the view that religion is merely a useful servant of the state, and the view that it is a delusion fostered by priests for their profit, are very ancient, and are sporadically recurrent. Both may, furthermore, at particular times be true of particular religions. It is always possible that an educational institution, or even an educational system, may fall into the hands of quacks and charlatans and may be maintained—no longer for the sake of education, which is a hard discipline—but with a view solely to the profit either of individuals or of the teaching guild as a whole. It is equally possible, also, that an educational institution or system may be perverted by interested people to the service of propaganda. And just so may religions at times suffer either of these misfortunes. But we learn nothing about education—though we may learn something about educational administration—by studying its perversions; we know, or ought to know, that every institution entrusted to man is, like man himself, open to perversion, degeneracy, and disease; and in the case of religion we should not imagine—any more than we do in the case of man or of other institutions—that we can learn its true nature and office from studying only part of the evidence, and in particular only the part showing that religions may become perverted, degen-

erate, or outworn. Undoubtedly some have considered this legitimate because religions lay claim to supernatural sanction; but, equally whether this claim be allowed or not, it remains a fact that religious institutions—exactly like all other institutions—are perforce in the hands of men, and are, consequently, exposed to every kind of danger.

We need pay no further attention to the charge that religion, being really a mischievous delusion fostered by priests for their own profit, is simply a burden to society. This charge was revived in the eighteenth century and was then widely credited. In our own time it has again been revived, in somewhat different form. We now hear it said that religion is only a tool of capitalism, maintained to keep the "wage-slaves" contented with their lot. But this, though it may be more or less true today of *some* religious organizations in some parts of the world, is absurd as a charge against all religion; and it is believed only by very ignorant and prejudiced people. No qualified student of religion nowadays gives the slightest support to this charge in either of its forms.

### **The enduring values of religion**

On the contrary, such students recognize that religion can perform, and has performed, services of the highest value to society; and for this reason it is necessary that we should clearly understand the autonomous character of religion. It is a fact, which has already been admitted, that society, or the state, can on occasion capture religion and use it for what we now call secular purposes; but what we must understand is that this is a perversion of religion which normally ends in killing it for the time being. The well-meaning people who hope thus to transform society end by transforming religion instead; and they so thoroughly discredit it in the course of their endeavors that finally it can perform no useful service of any kind.

Why should this be so? At bottom the reason is exceedingly simple and equally conclusive. Religion, as we have seen, has its starting point in some form of communication to man which is regarded as a species of divine revelation. It takes its rise, then, from an extraordinary experience which is be-



lieved to prove that man is in direct contact with superior powers able to affect his life favorably or unfavorably. This is a minimum statement. In the more developed religions it is explicitly held that man is in communication with, and is capable of becoming one with, ultimate Reality, and that the means necessary to salvation, as this union is termed, have been made known to him. Obviously, if this be so, religion is something fundamental, meriting man's primary allegiance. Everything else must be secondary to this. And consequently religion cannot, without perversion and degeneracy, be made to serve the state or society. It serves something infinitely more important; and it commands a devotion which statesmen envy, and vainly attempt to secure, solely because it represents something ultimate and absolute.

Yet, as has been said, religion performs services of incalculable value to society. But such services are secondary and of the nature of by-products. In general, as we have noticed, man's life is an unceasing struggle, terminated only by death, and usually involving many lesser defeats along the way to this inevitable end. And it is primarily religion which has fostered in men those qualities of character without which it is inconceivable that they should have continued undauntedly to face through the centuries those constant trials, hardships, and defeats imposed on them by the unalterable conditions of existence; and that they should, moreover, have so largely triumphed in those spheres of action within which it has proved possible for them to remake themselves and their environment. It is primarily religion which has given men courage, born of the conviction that higher powers are with them, supporting and aiding them. It is primarily religion which has given men faith that, despite all appearances, life is important, significant, and worth all it costs to carry it off well. It is primarily religion which has kept men modest in prosperity; which has curbed their insolence and brutality; which has fostered not only the early but the greatest developments of architecture, the fine arts, and literature; and which has tenaciously conserved past experience, without which man's existence would remain a wretched, hand-to-mouth affair.

These are great things. It has a paradoxical appearance, but it is undeniable that religion has been equally constructive and conservative. Perhaps it is only possible to be splendidly constructive upon a basis of conservatism. At any rate, it is to be noted that the constructive activity fostered by religion relates to what may be called the development of man's *humanity*; it does not relate to the development of the exact sciences which deal with the physical world and with man's animal nature. Real or supposed knowledge of this kind religion accepts, preserves—often until long after it has been discredited—and *uses*. But it has not fostered progress in this direction. It is, as not a few students have insisted, thoroughly *practical*, concerned as to how a man applies or uses knowledge, but relatively indifferent to that knowledge itself. And though this is only a half-truth, it is important. For it aids us to see that while religion, when unperverted, does serve fundamental interests of society, it serves these only to the extent that the interests of religion and of society happen to be identical. We have not the slightest notion how society might have developed without religion. There is no instance of such a development known to history or anthropology. It is reasonable to conclude that religion has been essential in the process. Yet religion does what society needs, not for the sake of society, but for its own sake. It has its own ends, its own purposes, and works for them. It has its own character; it is autonomous. It is only as it were by accident that it performs essential services to society, and those services it cannot perform when society succeeds in making religion its servant or slave.

We may sum this up by saying that religion stands alone among social institutions because all others are concerned with *means* to a good or satisfying life on earth, here and now; whereas religion is concerned with the *end*, beyond present existence on earth, towards which life is or should be directed, and in terms of which life is to be understood. We have already seen that every general statement about religion is open to some exception, but we will see as we proceed that the distinction just made is broadly true, especially of the higher religions of mankind.

## PRIMITIVE RELIGION

**The limitations of our knowledge**

When we turn from a general consideration of the character of religion to its history, we are first confronted with a question to which there is no answer. Nobody knows when the first religion arose, or where, or how. It has been mentioned, however, earlier in this work<sup>1</sup> that Neanderthal man apparently had some definitely religious belief, and it is reasonable to suppose that the earliest human societies were organized only on a basis afforded by religion. But, beyond this, nothing can be said, and we cannot even discuss with much certainty the religions of so-called "primitive" peoples. Evidence afforded by archaeology is, in this connection, of little value, because of the difficulty of interpreting it; and, of course, no "primitive" peoples are now in existence. Groups with relatively simple culture, such as those living in central Australia, may or may not be similar to "primitive" peoples—and there is no way of knowing. It is certain, however, that such tribes or communities have as long a past as our own, that their condition has not been absolutely static throughout an untold number of centuries, and that there is far less difference, in fundamental characteristics, between such groups and the most highly civilized peoples than was formerly supposed. It seems practically certain, moreover, that some savage groups are now preserving and transmitting only the decayed and tattered remnants of a culture and religion at one time more vigorous, positive, and complex.

Nowadays, of course, not because it is really "scientific," but because it is the easiest thing to do, we try to arrange every collection of varying phenomena in an order of succession patterned in accordance with the hypothesis of organic evolution. That hypothesis is now everywhere accepted, as Henry Adams has made clear to our generation, not because it is or can be proved, but because we find it irresistibly convenient. And for the same reason we extend it, and talk of "the evolu-

<sup>1</sup>See p. 133.



tion of religion." Thus anthropologists arrange religions in an order of ascending complexity, and call the simplest that they can find "primitive religion"—while those who are candid warn their readers that "primitive," as they use it, is "devoid of chronological import."<sup>1</sup> Readers should also be warned, however, that to talk of "the evolution of religion" is to employ only a loose and very imperfect analogy.

Actually, we know of nothing of the sort. Actually, we know only religions, not "religion," in history and in prehistoric times, and we do not see them turning into each other or succeeding each other in any regular, evolutionary way. We have already observed how the forms taken by religions are conditioned, or prescribed, by the development of groups at the times when their religions are introduced. Consequently "the evolution of religion" is just as much a fiction as is "the evolution of civilization." And in the case of religion, just as in the case of civilization, we can only observe anything approaching a regular process of change *within* given religions, but not connecting them with each other in any orderly sequence. All, in fact, that can be said on this subject is that generally religions seem, after a relatively short period, to enter into a course of gradual deterioration. There is nothing, however, to prove that this is inevitable, and more than one existing religion may yet demonstrate that at least the rule is open to exceptions.

### **Man's interpretation of experience in terms of power**

With these warnings in mind, we will now glance briefly at the most elementary forms of religion of which anything is known. In the first place, we have no evidence of any being properly to be regarded as a man who does not have some kind of consciousness of himself as a purposeful agent. Man, then—the earliest we can imagine—finds himself in a world where objects surrounding him are, like him, apparently capable of moving themselves and of acting. He assumes unquestioningly that they are "powers." He himself is a "power." When he does something he means to do it, he

<sup>1</sup>Robert H. Lowie, *Primitive Religion*.

is actuated by some purpose. He assumes that it is the same with other "powers." When a black cloud comes up the sky, flashing lightning and sending forth peals of thunder, it *means* to do that; and when it strikes trees near by and other men, it means to do that also, and of course purposely spares him. When, a little later, he is suddenly attacked by an acute pain in his belly, he straightway assumes that some other "power"—this time an invisible one—has struck him down. His world is peopled with these powers, because whatever happens to him must be the act of one of them. He begins to differentiate them in accordance with the places where they are active—sky, mountain, and the like—or in accordance with what they do. He comes to think of some as unfriendly, of others as uncertain or indifferent, though capable of being friendly;—and sooner or later some surprising event convinces him that there is a way of getting them to help him. It is a disputed question whether this moment marks the birth of magic or of religion. It is, however, probably a mistake to try to distinguish the two sharply at this, or even at a considerably later, stage of development, and the effort will not be made here.

The word "power" has been used to indicate that at first these notions are spontaneous, unquestioning, and vague. But it is not long before man becomes sufficiently reflective to get the idea that he is made up of soul and body, the former being the animating principle, the real man or self; the latter being the soul's temporary place of abode. The observation of death helps to suggest this idea, and also the observer's own dreams. The conditions of savage life make regular eating often an impossibility, and alternate periods of fasting and of over-eating promote both "visions" during waking hours and vivid dreams. In addition, victims of mental and nervous disorders have seemed to their contemporaries, through many ages, obviously to be possessed by some "power." To see a man die is to see the soul, or whatever it was that animated him, depart. The commonest notions were that it left with the dying man's last breath, or, if he had been wounded, that it oozed out with his blood. In any case it is very evident that its departure

makes a profound difference. And dreams shed light on the phenomenon. In them the dreamer has many experiences which seem to prove that the soul leaves its body temporarily—amongst these the experience of meeting, talking with, or perhaps fighting with the souls of dead men. It is all very definite and conclusive, and from the accumulated evidence of dreams it can be discovered just what souls are like, how they spend their time, what is needed to keep them contented, and, indeed, everything one might want to know about them.

### Animism and totemism

The inference is natural that all things capable of moving or acting likewise have souls. Animals have them, and so do trees, rivers, clouds, the stars, and the like. Besides, to account for things that happen without visible agency, there are unembodied spirits. This stage of belief is called *animism*. And since man cannot live without encountering these spirits constantly, it is of the utmost importance to him to know how to treat them. It is very generally believed, for example, that the spirits of the dead require certain attentions from their living descendants, and that they become malignant enemies when neglected. Acts of propitiation, sacrifices, and offerings, directed towards powerful spirits, thus begin, and often develop in time into very intricate ceremonies, every detail of which is important and must be exactly carried out, though the original reason may long since have been forgotten.

It is very early believed, however, not only that man can protect himself from hostile spirits, but that he can make some spirits serve his own purposes. Two methods of doing so have been followed at one time or another almost everywhere. One is to induce a spirit to enter into a man who then can control it. Such a man, having peculiarly close relations with spirits, is called a *Shaman*. He can, through his power over them, see into the future, learn what is occurring in distant places, discover what is necessary to influence the spirits favorably, expel harmful spirits, and, generally, meet every emergency. The Shaman is, in other words, not unlike the modern spiritualistic "medium." The other common method of con-



trolling the spirits for human purposes is to conjure them into some object—usually a small one that may easily be carried about—and then to seal it up tightly. Such an object is then a *fetish*, and often a man will have a number of them, each one serving to protect him from some specific ill, or to give him some desirable quality.

Since everything that affects man's life is endowed with a spirit or soul, animals are regarded as beings similar to men except in appearance. Some of them, moreover, are superior to men in certain respects. Hence it is not surprising that men should seek to form alliances with them. The same kind of union is also formed, for the same reason, with some plants, with such objects as the sun or the moon, and sometimes even with a valuable artificial object, such as an ax. This is *totemism*; and the totem is regarded as a powerful friend, and gives its name to the group, and aids greatly in binding the members together closely. At the same time there are some objects, some events, that are held to be dangerous. Hence contact with them, or the performance of certain deeds, is prohibited, on pain of untold calamity, not only to the offender but to all connected with him. Such prohibitions are *taboos*. They are "as various as the conditions of human life."

### TRANSITION TO POLYTHEISM

The principal characteristics of "primitive religion," just enumerated, show how primitive man's "science and philosophy" caused him to see a religious significance in practically every aspect of his life and in every portion of his environment which he could observe acting upon him or affecting him in any way. Yet at the same time, as we should see more plainly could we go further into detail, while primitive man appears to have taken a "future life" for granted, his attention was concentrated, for himself, upon his present life and his own practical problems while living on earth. The world was full of souls or spirits—it is impossible to draw a line between the two—and he himself was a soul like the rest, and they all continued to exist, indefinitely or for "a very long time." But the important aspect of this discovery was its direct bear-

ing upon man's immediate problems here and now. The spirits could help or hurt;—the great thing was to get them on one's own side, to get them to do what man wanted, to coerce, cajole, or persuade them to side with man in his endeavors—in hunting, in fighting, in getting women, in getting children, in securing the best and the most of everything.

There was no particular question about what one wanted—that could be allowed to take care of itself. The thing was to get it. And this is the characteristic point of view of what we may call the “natural man.” Such, apparently, were the earliest human beings, or that great majority of them about whom alone we can make probable conjectures. But the type has persisted, and indeed flourished. We find it today, in all essentials indistinguishable from so-called primitive man, not only in existing backward peoples, but in the most highly civilized communities of the Western world. It is, in fact, the “natural man” who has caused recent writers to declare that in the late nineteenth century the doctrine or dogma of “progress” became the real dominant religion of Western civilization. And the viewpoint of the “natural man,” as we see, is not inconsistent with a certain kind of religion. The form taken by that religion in the most elementary cultures was conditioned by the “science and philosophy” of the period. As man reached a more complex and more highly developed state of existence, “animism” turned into *polytheism*; but this was a change of form, not of fundamental character—just as the so-called “religion of progress” of quite recent times is basically identical *in spirit* with animism, though radically different in form.

### POLYTHEISM

In polytheism the government of the world is regarded as being lodged in a number of superhuman figures, very similar to men in every respect save length of life and extent of power. Animism tended constantly to make the spirits more like persons, and the relation between the spirits and man more like a personal one. Further reflection, an altered conception of man's dependence on nature—when agriculture came to de-

mand systematic operations on a large scale—and the development of highly organized political systems, gathering many groups together under a single rule, all contributed to carry this tendency to its conclusion—the substitution of the god for the spirit. The change was not absolute or complete, and much that was characteristic of animism continued to be believed. But a new conception of the divine made its appearance, and had a rich and varied development. In general it amounted to this: The “powers” affecting man’s life were felt to be, not less real than before, but more distant, more independent of merely local manifestation, grander, more like great personages and kingly rulers. The “powers,” in other words, could no longer be thought of merely in terms of what they *did*. Increased knowledge, together with a growing sense of human dignity and worth, and a larger conception of the possibilities of life, impelled men to think more of what the “powers” *were*. What kind of being would, and could, do the things the “powers” are responsible for? The answer was irresistible: *Persons*, beings like men, though endowed with superhuman strength, agility, loveliness, kindness, longevity—with, in short, every human quality or characteristic raised to a higher power, including anger, eagerness for gifts, and lust.

These were gods. They did not make their appearance in accordance with any plan, or system. They were of gradual growth. There were as many of them, with as many different characteristics, as men felt the need for. There were gods of the sky, of the sea, of earth, of food-planting, of harvest, of war, of love, of child-bearing, of creation, of the other world, of victory; gods of clans or groups or cities; sun-gods, moon-gods, or goddesses, and so on, to an indefinite number.<sup>1</sup> What they were like can be seen, far better than it can be described, in such poems as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and in Greek sculptured representations of the gods.

In Homer, moreover, one sees the beginnings of a further development. For the Homeric gods themselves form a com-

<sup>1</sup>A brief account of nature gods anciently worshiped in the Near East is to be found in Chapter 7 of this volume, pp. 170–174.



munity, with Zeus at their head, ruler both of gods and of men, yet himself subject to a power beyond him, Fate, and able to command no absolute obedience from his fellow-gods. And from Hesiod one learns that the Greek gods not only formed a community from a very early time, but that they also had a history. This was preserved in *myths*. A myth is simply an answer to a question—a story told to explain how something happened “once upon a time.” Such stories, of course, aided greatly in objectifying and rendering definite the conceptions of the divine which prevailed during this stage of belief in the several parts of the world. They also aided in introducing order into the various assemblages of gods, as, too, did more elaborate and settled habits of worship.

The transition from animism to polytheism had been, in part, a movement away from an implicit belief in anarchy amongst the “powers” affecting man’s life. Later efforts to conceive of the gods as forming a community with some one great god at their head, such as Zeus amongst Greek peoples, were more conscious attempts in the same direction. Increasing knowledge, together with the formation of large city-states and great empires, made men conscious that the processes of change in their physical environment were on the whole *orderly* processes; and political development at the same time necessitated *orderly* relations between men—not only between members of the same small group, but between hundreds of groups, families, clans, all gathered together in one comprehensive organization. The situation made *justice* a fundamental requisite of life, even though it was practically, as it has remained, an unattainable ideal. The need, however, served at least to promote the change which was taking place in religion—the change to a conception of the gods as the sources of order, with some one god tending to assume general command in the interest of justice.

### THE HIGHER RELIGIONS

When polytheism reached the point just described it had got about as far, apparently, as it could go. Such a religion might remain indefinitely satisfactory to a people—as also might

animism. That would depend on the level of culture beyond which, for one reason or another, a given group might never go. There are peoples today whose religion is animistic; and other peoples who are polytheists. And this is true not only of tribes or groups whom we should unhesitatingly call "backward," but also of highly civilized peoples. In China, for example, though conditions are at present too chaotic to permit of confident generalization, until 1912, when the Manchu dynasty was overthrown, the religion of the State was polytheistic, and that of the masses of the people a mixture of ancestor-worship with certain animistic elements.<sup>1</sup>

### The persistence of early religious conceptions

In other civilized lands than China, however, where many circumstances were quite different, polytheism was proving unable, by the fifth century B. C. or earlier, to adapt itself to increased knowledge and the demands of mature reflection. Nor is this surprising. In general, the kinds of religion which have thus far been noticed are alike, as has been said above, in that they are appropriate, at different levels of experience or culture, to the "natural man." The "natural man" is one who, whether he considers a future life certain or not, thinks in terms of his present life here and now, or of himself as one whose success is to be measured in terms of earthly satisfactions. He is, in the language of Christianity, the "unregenerate man," or the "once-born man." He is conscious of needs—the good life is one in which they are satisfied. He thinks of the "powers" manifesting themselves around him as possible aids in the execution of his own purposes. He tries to get them on his side; or, if they seem definitely hostile, he tries to buy them off.

This point of view is one which the "natural man" shares with children, and some have not hesitated to call it childish.

<sup>1</sup>Nothing, of course, like a complete history of religions can be attempted in these chapters. It is intended simply to give a sketch of developments necessary to an understanding of the history and place of religion in Western civilization. Hence no outline of religion in China can be presented; nor can any mention be made of the work of Confucius (551-478 B. C.), interesting though that is as the world's best example of the inculcation of worldly wisdom of a high type on a religious basis.

It depends, at any rate, on what we can recognize as youthful illusions, however unavoidable such illusions may be at a certain stage of experience. It is an illusion, for example, to suppose that our needs can ever be satisfied—for they expand and change constantly in proportion as we do satisfy them. It is an illusion, again, to suppose that we can become masters of our fate. We know much better than did any man 3000 years ago how to enslave or buy off the "powers" of nature; but there are limits beyond which we cannot go in this enterprise, and these limits are far on the lower side of what is necessary to make man the "lord of creation." It is an illusion, furthermore, in view of these circumstances, to suppose that life is an opportunity for enjoyment.

### The emergence of new religious conceptions

Such considerations as these, which men become aware of almost as soon as they cease taking life for granted and begin to reflect questioningly upon its real nature, were doubtless abroad in the ancient world from a very early time. They suggested to some, as they do today, that life was an empty farce, look at it how one might.<sup>1</sup> But to others they suggested a very different conclusion; and a whole group of religions arose whose founders taught that the meaning of life lay in the opportunity it afforded the individual, not to win the gods over to his side, but to bring himself over to the side of God. In important respects these religions varied from each other; but they are remarkable for the extent to which, at bottom, they taught the same lesson: that life is crucially significant, though only an episode in the existence of the soul, that our real business is the remaking of ourselves, that we can free ourselves from illusion, and that we can attain for all eternity the end towards which our whole being is directed—the peace which passeth understanding.

This development constituted no absolute break with the past. It was rather a new orientation of old elements. It

<sup>1</sup>As regards our time, see *The Modern Temper*, by J. W. Krutch (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927). The book can only be understood as a somewhat unusual example of self-revelation.



found room for the whole life of man, but gave that life a larger meaning than before, and opened up an inexhaustible vista. It was the fruit of disillusionment, yet was a discovery that life was fuller and more abundant than the "natural man" had ever guessed. It adapted itself, of necessity, to varying antecedents and conditions in the several parts of the world—and this accounts for the varying characteristics to be observed in those religions which can here be briefly described.

### Buddhism

India was invaded from the north by Aryan peoples at some time earlier—probably a good deal earlier—than 1000 B. C. The Aryans brought with them a nature-religion which developed into a polytheism whose records are extant in a collection of works known as *Vedas*. These served as the basis for a great further development, at the hands of an emerging priestly caste, the *Brahmans*, who elaborated ritual ceremonies, but also were deeply engaged in philosophical thought. It was thus against a background of minutely systematized religious observance and also of profound religious philosophy that an Aryan nobleman, Siddhartha Gotama, was brought up. He was born, according to our methods of calculating time, about 563 B. C. (died about 483 B. C.), and was to become known to all the world as the *Buddha*—the Wise, Enlightened one, the Messiah. His contemporaries had come to believe in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and the great problem with which they were concerned was one of deliverance—deliverance from the endless wheel of successive incarnations, which, if it was really endless and cyclical, made life an empty mockery.

Gotama, seeking deliverance, left his wife, his son, his home, his place in the social world, and for seven years sought the answer to his question, first under the guidance of teachers learned in the methods of inducing mystical ecstasy, and then through severe ascetic practices, until finally the four great truths leading to salvation "came" to him in a moment of quiet rest. He then, at the age of about thirty-seven, became a teacher, and in substance taught as follows: The self is

condemned to an endless chain of successive embodiments, of which the present life is a single link. Suffering is inevitable and universal throughout life, and has its origin in desire. We are ignorant of the way in which desire, purpose, deed, and consequence are linked together, and for this reason keep desiring only what can lead to suffering. Suffering cannot be ended except by extinguishing desire itself—even the desire for life. This may be accomplished by following the “eightfold path”—a course of moral and intellectual self-discipline which leads to a gradual withdrawal of the self from the body through the suppression of sensation, intellection, and consciousness itself. At the further end of the “eightfold path” one may actually experience by anticipation the state of eternal peace—Nirvana. Selfhood, to Buddha, is itself a bondage to illusion. Nirvana is often spoken of as if it were the negation of existence, and this has given rise to much misunderstanding. It is defined negatively because this is the only way in which we can now speak of it, but the conception itself is positive. Nirvana is a blessed state of release from bondage—it is the peace which passeth understanding.

To follow the “eightfold path” one had to do as Buddha had done—renounce the world and devote one’s self wholly to the task of self-discipline. Buddha founded a monkish order for the purpose, whose members depended for the necessities of life on alms, bestowed by those who could not or would not themselves follow the way of salvation. All that these lay-Buddhists could hope for was that they might be able to become mendicant brothers in a future incarnation. Buddha himself was simply the teacher of men; and even later, when he came to be regarded as divine, he was supremely venerated rather than worshiped. For it remained the doctrine of Buddhism that deliverance, or salvation, could come only through adherence to the “eightfold path”—that, in other words, man had to work out his own salvation, which could not be bestowed on him through any supernatural grace or intervention. This was too austere a creed to become popular, and as Buddhism spread into Tibet, China, Korea, and Japan, it was considerably modified. It is preserved, however,

in a pure form as a living belief, in Ceylon, Burma, and Siam, though there have been no Buddhists in India itself since about the fourteenth century of our era.

### Zoroastrianism

At about the same time that some of the Aryans moved down into India, others moved westward into Persia and Media, taking with them a nature-religion very similar to that of the Vedic Indians, with identical names for various gods, and with at least some identical usages. The names of several of these gods appear in documents found in Asia Minor and dating from early in the fourteenth century B. C. It was not, however, until much later—about the second half of the seventh century B. C.—that the Iranians, as they are called, really established a united kingdom in Media. *Zoroaster* was probably a Mede, and was probably born a good many years before this event. Practically nothing is known about his life, though there is no doubt that he was an historical person, and is not a mere legendary figure. Such evidence as there is suggests that the traditional date of his birth (660 B. C.) is almost certainly too late, and perhaps very much too late. If he was a Mede, he probably was driven by hostility to his teaching to settle in Bactria, in eastern Iran, where he is said to have made his first converts. What is definitely known about him is that he appeared as a reforming prophet to whom had been revealed the true religion of the true god, in opposition to the false Iranian nature-religion.

This polytheism Zoroaster totally rejected, preaching a true monotheism. There is, he taught, but one god, Ahura Mazda, the Lord Wisdom. Mazda, however, as his earliest deed, created several beneficent powers—the Good Mind, the Right, Piety, Sovereignty, and others—who remained his close associates. Inasmuch as Mazda was proclaimed the true god in opposition to the old polytheism, the Iranian gods became the devils of the new religion. And Zoroaster saw in the existence of opposites a principle which extended throughout the world and throughout life. There are beneficent plants and poisonous; there are civilized men and barbarians; there



are beasts helpful to man and beasts hostile; there are true believers and false believers; there is, in short, a division running throughout all things. Those who followed Zoroaster, moreover, did so of their own volition. Hence he was led to conclude that every man is free to choose whether he will be of those who are for or against righteousness and truth. This earth is a battlefield, and life is warfare. Not only men, but also animals and plants and all things that compose the earth are arrayed in two opposing armies, respectively led by Ahura Mazda and by Ahriman—that is, by God and by Satan. Zoroaster foretold the ultimate triumph of the Good, which was to result in the earth's becoming a paradise. He believed that this victory and change were close at hand, which gave urgency to his preaching; and he taught that after Mazda's triumph there would be a Day of Judgment accompanied by the resurrection of the dead. Those adjudged not wanting were to live eternally in the earthly paradise, while the evil were to be tormented by fire.

In later generations, when the victory of Mazda seemed to be as far off as ever, it was taught that the souls of the dead underwent a preliminary judgment immediately, and journeyed over a bridge, broad for the righteous, but narrow as a sword's edge for the wicked. The latter accordingly tumbled into a fathomless abyss, while the former passed over easily into a region of light close to Ahura Mazda.

Zoroastrianism is preëminently an ethical religion. There is only one way to be saved—by fighting in the cause of righteousness with the militant God of Right. To live the good life is to obey the moral law, to meet evil by fighting it and overcoming it, both as it appears within one's self and as it appears in the surrounding world. One is not to requite evil with good, but to exterminate it. One is not to retreat from the world, but to do battle unceasingly in it while life lasts.

With the rise and spread of Mohammedanism<sup>1</sup> in the seventh and following centuries of the Christian era both Chris-

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<sup>1</sup>Limitations of space have prevented the inclusion of any outline of Mohammedanism, which is less important for the purpose of these chapters than the religions here considered.

tians and Zoroastrians in western Asia found their old religions a burden, and in the great majority of cases too heavy a burden to be borne along with the rule of their Moslem conquerors. Hence, particularly from about the ninth century, Zoroastrianism tended to decline. At the present time there are said to be only about 10,000 Zoroastrians in Persia. There are, however, about 90,000 more in India, chiefly in Bombay, where they form a prosperous community of their own.

### Judaism

The religion of the Hebrews was similar to Zoroastrianism in that it was announced by prophets as a true monotheism opposed to the nature-religions of neighboring peoples. In the beginning, however, it did not make its appeal to individuals, as did Zoroastrianism, but to the nation as a whole; and it promised no future life to believers, but only a glorious future for the nation. The Hebrew god, Jehovah, was a jealous and wrathful deity, who threatened his people with national disaster if they did not worship him alone. To worship him truly, however, was not only to be scrupulous in carrying out ceremonial requirements, but also to be just, to be honest, to be compassionate towards the poor and the unfortunate, to avoid sexual irregularity, and the like. Fundamental elements of right behavior towards both Jehovah and one's fellow men are stated briefly in the Ten Commandments (Exodus, 20: 1-17), and although these in their present form include elements from as late a time as about 450 B. C., in the main they date from the eighth century B. C. and embody some commands from an even earlier period.

The warnings of national disaster to follow upon disobedience, which had repeatedly been given by the prophets of Jehovah, were duly fulfilled, especially by the Babylonian conquest at the close of the sixth century. Thereafter the doctrine of divine retribution was further individualized, and it was taught that Jehovah insured to every man his just deserts while living on earth. This doctrine was made very rigorous, but it accords so ill with experience that it could not persist without serious modification. The Book of Job is the great

monument of revolt against it (written probably about 450–425 B. C.), but its author had serious difficulty when he came to face the consequences; for he could only declare that while Jehovah was certainly a just god, his dealings with his worshipers were beyond the compass of our understandings.

This has everywhere been a crucial problem in the development of religion. There was a distinct tendency for a time amongst the Hebrews to abandon the moral law as a vanity, because the Creator of the world evidently had no regard for it.<sup>1</sup> A way out of the dilemma, however, was found in acceptance of the doctrine of a future life, in which the good were to be rewarded eternally, and the evil punished. This doctrine had not been preached by the older prophets and did not become a part of Hebrew religion until some time after about 400 B. C. It was then suggested to the Jews, on one side, by Zoroastrianism, and on the other by the Greeks. This at least is the most probable conjecture as to its origin amongst them, but it has rightly been pointed out that the doctrine was so evidently necessary to the completion of their ethical beliefs that they must have thought of it as really their own, and essentially Jewish, wherever they discovered it. Accordingly, it was adopted, some believing only in the immortality of the soul, and others believing, with the Zoroastrians, in a final resurrection of the body, a general last judgment of the quick and the dead, and a paradise for those found not wanting. To both classes of believers, the things necessary for salvation were the same: allegiance to the one true and just god, and complete obedience to his laws, both moral and ceremonial.

That the requirement of perfect obedience, if rigidly exacted, would condemn all men to perdition was, however, recognized; and it was taught that Jehovah, foreseeing man's weakness and instability, had mercifully agreed to accept repentance as a sufficient remedy for sin, or disobedience. Hence repentance became a primary factor in the Judaic scheme of salvation, and as such it was carefully safeguarded. It had to be a genuine turning away from evil, and its reality was to be judged by results. To return to one's sin after repentance

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the Book of Ecclesiastes.



proved that repentance had not been real, and no severity of penance could atone for such failure. On the other hand, no amount or kind of sin was too evil to permit of Jehovah's forgiveness if repentance was complete and genuine.

### The Greek Mysteries

Every polytheistic religion is the product of a slow growth out of many elements which are not capable of being completely harmonized. All polytheisms consequently have loose edges, so to say, which give room for special developments under favoring circumstances. Two such special developments which took place in Greece demand notice here—the worship of Dionysus and the worship of Demeter.<sup>1</sup> Both took the form of *mysteries*. A “mystery” to the Greek was “a ritual-drama, beheld and shared only by the initiated”; and it was this characteristic of these religions which has caused the use of this word to describe them. The actual secrets of initiation were probably of no great importance. What is important to us is the fact that the immortality of the soul—as a religious belief, not as a philosophical doctrine—received its chief support and great development in Greece from the Orphic mysteries (Dionysus-worship) and the Eleusinian mysteries (Demeter-worship). The origin of both cults is lost in the obscurity of the prehistoric age—the Dionysus cult in particular embodying elements of immemorial antiquity—and both persisted until the triumph of Christianity.

The cult of Dionysus came down into Greece from Thrace, and there is evidence that it was known as early as the sixth century B. C. The tradition was that the doctrine had been divinely revealed to Orpheus. It was in substance as follows: Man is made up of evil and of divine elements. He possesses a divine and immortal soul, of which his body is the prison house or grave. He is doomed to suffer punishment after death for sins of the body on earth, and then to be reborn once more, and so on *ad infinitum*. Release from this endless succession of sin and punishment is, however, possible. By

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 8 of this volume, pp. 212-214, for an outline of the general development of Greek religion in connection with Greek science and philosophy.

certain acts man can break the chain and win eternal life with the blessed gods. The essential features in this process, which must be kept secret, are the rebirth of man into a divine existence, and the careful observance thereafter of ritual purity of life. Rebirth is accomplished by actual participation in the substance of the god—as, for example, by tearing apart a living animal, believed to be, at least for the time being, the god himself, and drinking up the warm blood or devouring the warm and palpitating flesh. Thus man becomes himself divine, enters on a new life, and is assured of a happy and blessed immortality.

As Orphism was known in Greece it contained Pythagorean elements, and the initiation, or rebirth of man into his true divine nature, became an elaborate symbolic drama. Dionysus was a vegetation-god, and in his own life symbolized that which he was. For he was fabled annually to become seized with madness, to rush wildly through forests, and finally to be torn in pieces by enemies, only to be brought back to life again. Hence his followers sought to participate in his divinity by re-enacting this pursuit, death, and resurrection.

The Eleusinian mysteries differed from the Orphic greatly in details, but the character and object and importance of both were identical. And the high significance of the mysteries lies in the fact that they expressed the enduring conviction of the Greeks that religion is a crucial reality for the individual. This the Olympian religion of the state could not do, and its failure left a gap which, history shows, man must fill, somehow or other, in the best way he can—a gap which he will fill in a poor way if no good one is open to him. The mysteries made religion a matter of actual experience—not a matter of formal ceremony and conventional observance—and so made vital the doctrine that there is an element of undying divinity in man's nature, and that the purpose of human life lies in the opportunity it gives the soul to win its way to eternal union with Reality itself, or the divine nature. Orphism, in addition, taught that all things come from god, whatever name or names be used to designate him, and find the reason for their existence in the possibility of returning to their source.

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## CHRISTIANITY BEFORE MODERN TIMES

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**T**HE BRIEF ACCOUNT of Judaism given in the preceding chapter contains no mention of one development whose seeds were early sown, and whose growth was rapid during the years immediately before the Christian era. This was the repeated assurance given by prophets that the long struggle of Israel was to issue in a glorious consummation, which was to be heralded by, or brought about by, a *Messiah*, an "anointed one," who would, it was usually said, be of the tribe of Judah and a descendant of David. Opinion varied as to just what was to happen, and as to the precise office and status of the Messiah, or—to use the Greek form of the word—Christ. All were agreed that he was to be sent by Jehovah and was to effect the deliverance of the Chosen People. To some, however, this only meant that a great conquering ruler was to appear, who was to overthrow the Roman Empire and all other kingdoms and to set up a magnificent Jewish domination of the earth. It was all to be most satisfactory for the Jews, and it was to last for ever. But as time passed, the fact became more and more clear that even such a purely national deliverance as this could scarcely be accomplished without the direct intervention of Jehovah, and the conception of the Messiah began to be transformed accordingly. With the spread of belief in a future life, moreover, and a corresponding tendency

to individualize the approaching deliverance, it came to assume a very different form. The Messiah was to appear in glory as a divine or semi-divine representative of Jehovah announcing the end of the world and the institution of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which the righteous—both the quick and the dead—were to enjoy an eternal and blessed life.

In accordance with this expectation, alleged forerunners of the Messiah occasionally appeared, in the last years of the pre-Christian era and in the earliest years of our era, who were able to attract a considerable number of followers when they proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and the time for repentance was short. One of these was a man who washed away, in the river Jordan, the sins of those who repented, and who was hence called John the Baptizer, or Baptist. Before him appeared a young man of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, a carpenter. Tradition has it that John recognized in Joseph's son, whose name was Jesus, the Messiah whose coming he had prophesied;—and from this we may date the beginning of Christianity.

## LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS

### Sources of our knowledge

Practically all that we know concerning Jesus comes to us from a collection of narratives and epistles called the New Testament. These documents were written at various times within a hundred years of the death of Jesus, and were long regarded, together with sacred writings of the Hebrews comprised in the Old Testament, as above question or investigation; because it was believed that God had in effect dictated them and had so ensured their complete accuracy. For a couple of centuries, however, it has been increasingly recognized that, whatever their ultimate source, these books were written and transmitted by men like ourselves, under human conditions, and that consequently they must be treated and studied in exactly the same way as any other historical documents, if we are to understand them aright.

Such study has been very active, especially during the last

hundred years, and has resulted in definite conclusions which nobody can now ignore. We have to be on our guard, however, against fancy "reconstructions" of the life and teaching of Jesus based, not simply or even primarily on critical study, but on what their authors regard as possible, or probable, or desirable, in view of modern science and philosophy. The most famous of these are *Das Leben Jesu* (1835), by David Strauss, and *La Vie de Jésus* (1863), by Ernest Renan, but there are many others like them. They are all works of imagination controlled by prejudice, even though they embody results of careful historical criticism. Actually, the New Testament contains several records which, in essentials, agree remarkably with each other, and which show how the life of Jesus was understood in the earliest age of the Christian Church. It is possible, but not likely, that all those who wrote the several portions of the New Testament misinterpreted that life. If they did, it is an extraordinary fact that they all misinterpreted it in the same way. The evidence available would really be regarded as conclusive for any other historical event, and has been impugned or cast aside in this instance for reasons which have nothing to do with the established principles of historical criticism.

In any case, we cannot go behind the extant records, and these agree in exhibiting Jesus as one who became persuaded that he was the expected Messiah. As the Messiah, his life and death were the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and so close and constant is the correspondence that the former cannot be understood without the latter. Jesus, then, from the beginning, so far as we can know, was understood to have lived, and spoken, and acted in conscious fulfillment of the promises which had been made by God through the prophets to his People.

### Jesus as a moral teacher

Jesus was a teacher, a profound moral teacher, and his words were the fulfillment of the moral Law of the Hebrews. It was not enough for a man to obey in outward action the old commands; one must not even entertain secretly the mere



thought of disobedience. Only the pure in heart might hope to see God. It was not how a man seemed to be that mattered, but what he was. And to save his soul, his real self, to win his way through shams to what was true, a man must turn away wholly from evil—that is, from everything that might enslave him to what was only of this earth. The trouble with the things of this earth was that they were corruptible, that they passed away from moment to moment and were no more, that no reliance could be placed in them, so that the man pursuing these shadows was led a vain chase while he became enslaved to them and like them in nature—the creature of shadows and a shadow himself. Where one's heart was, there was one's destiny. It was not that the things of earth were essentially evil—but man's business was to *use* them, not to be used by them. Even the Sabbath was created for man, not man for the Sabbath. Hence man might use the things of this earth, but he must at all costs keep himself unspotted by the world, detach himself from dependence on it, and cleave to the unseen things which are eternal.

So to do was to become pure in heart; but, such was man's nature, partaking of the corruptible earth, that purity itself tended to encourage spiritual pride—the conceit of lordliness. Hence it was necessary also for man never to forget that he was not his own creator, but a creature, and that all he was or might become he owed to the Author of his being. Not to the wise in their own estimation, but to those who were meek and lowly of heart was the way open to fullness of life—because only the humble could truly know themselves for what men are, and *feel* their debt to God.

And to love God, on whom all depended, was the final thing needful, loving also one's neighbor as one's self. It was not enough to reverence God; it was necessary to love him, to love righteousness in and for itself, with one's whole being, with such singleness of heart that one's love overflowed to one's neighbor. It was not that one's neighbor was worthy of love; only God was worthy of it; but God was worthy even of such love as could not but extend itself to his children for the Father's sake.

**Jesus more than a moral teacher**

Such, in substance, according to the records, was the teaching of Jesus. There is no hint of sentimentalism, no indulgence, no relenting attitude towards the unrighteous, no trace of modern humanitarianism, in the love of which he made so much account. A great deal else in his teaching invites comment, but we must go on at once to observe that he was not simply, not even chiefly, a moral teacher. It was essential to his task to make it clear that those who were to be of the Kingdom must obey counsels of unworldly perfection; but he repeatedly said, in effect, that men could not hope to *make themselves worthy* of eternal life, yet that all things might be possible to them if only they could unqualifiedly believe in him as the Christ. He was the Son of God, sent to live the divine life as a man under human conditions. He was, not merely through what he *said*, but substantially in his person and by his life itself and death, the Word of God communicated aforetime through the prophets and now made flesh. He came to redeem men, not by sage advice, or by exhortation to good behavior, or by arousing within them a shallow and vain humanitarianism, but by the direct and living act of the living God. His teaching was primarily a commentary on his nature and on the life of the divine nature under earthly conditions. That life was one of isolation, of apparent weakness, of suffering—and it ended in death by crucifixion, the punishment reserved for criminals. Nevertheless it was a triumphant life too, and precisely because of its tragic cast; for it was a victory of righteousness, steadfast against all odds, and courting death rather than submission to the sinful world. Hence it was that men were, as the supreme test of their good faith, to believe in Jesus as the Christ, because his redemptive efficacy lay in the man himself, in his life and death, in which men could participate only through entire belief, signified outwardly by reception of the Eucharist. Acceptance of Christ in singleness of heart meant acceptance with full knowledge of righteousness itself, whatever the consequences; and this in turn meant freedom from sin, and fullness of life.

### EARLY SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

It is often said, as if it were a matter of some importance, that Jesus had no intention of founding a new religion—a fact which should be obvious from the account just given of his life and teaching. But the acceptance of the claim that he was indeed the Christ—immediately confirmed, as his followers believed, by his Resurrection on the third day after his death—inevitably transformed Hebrew religion in the very process of fulfilling its promise.

#### Emergence of Christianity as a new religion

The claim made by Jesus and for him was never accepted by more than a minority of the Jews, who accordingly persisted, as they do today, in their old religion; while at the same time the gospel of Christ was almost at once carried far beyond Palestine and was readily accepted amongst the Gentiles, or non-Jewish peoples, of the Roman Empire. The books of the New Testament, indeed, from which we derive our knowledge of Jesus, were principally composed for the use of converts amongst the Gentiles. And these converts, of course, as well as the Jews, could only understand the gospel of Christ in terms of the science and philosophy and earlier religion then current. Jesus himself, if he was divine, was also human, and had been constrained not only to speak the language of his time and place, but to think and speak in terms of what could be understood. Necessarily, then, with what degree of exaggeration or distortion nobody can know, when his gospel was carried abroad, it was colored by those who received it. Since, for example, it was proclaimed that Jesus was the Son of God, it was unavoidable that it should have been believed and asserted that he had been a wonder-worker; for the power to perform miracles was then everywhere regarded as an attribute of divinity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>It is more than likely, however, that this belief had a large basis in fact; inasmuch as it is scarcely open to doubt that Jesus was able to effect cures in a manner we do not yet understand, though apparently similar cures are a matter of authentic experience, in our time as in former ages.



Inconsistencies in the New Testament, as well as relics of long-past conditions, seem far less important today than they did to critics of the nineteenth century; because with closer study and fuller knowledge it has now become evident that most, if not all, of these inconsistencies can be explained as consequences of varying efforts to interpret the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles. What is important, and increasingly clear, is that the primitive Christian Church came into existence and rapidly grew because the great facts of the life and death of Jesus, as soon as they came to be known and to be understood, everywhere carried conviction. Men really believed that Jesus, by what he spoke and did, had finally and completely expressed the purpose of the true God. The men, moreover, who formed this belief were, as was said above, chiefly non-Jewish men, to whom the gospel came as a genuinely new religion—and one further removed from its Judaic origin by the very act of interpreting it to them—so that, despite a continuity between Judaism and Christianity which never was lost sight of, the gospel very soon was rightly regarded as something distinctive and new, deserving a name of its own.

### Reasons for the rapid spread of Christianity

It was at one time felt that there was something miraculous in the way in which the new religion spread out from Jerusalem. It has long been recognized, however, that the conversion of the ancient world may be fully accounted for by a combination of favoring circumstances in the earliest years of our era. One of these was the existence of the Roman Empire, in which, as the historian Gibbon says, "the most civilized provinces of Europe, Asia, and Africa were united under the dominion of one sovereign, and gradually connected by the most intimate ties of laws, of manners, and of language. . . . The public highways, which had been constructed for the use of the legions, opened an easy passage for the Christian missionaries from Damascus to Corinth, and from Italy to the extremity of Spain or Britain; nor did those spiritual conquerors encounter any of the obstacles which usually retard or prevent the introduction of a foreign religion into a distant country." Not only,

however, had Rome unified the civilized world surrounding the Mediterranean, and made it easy for influences to spread from one part of the Empire to others; she had proved incompetent to deal with the religious problems created by her military and political success.

Roman statesmen were acutely conscious that this was a weak spot in the organization of the Empire, but their strenuous efforts to meet religious needs were not in the long run successful. The old Roman religion had consisted in the worship, and propitiation, of spirits or "powers" believed to watch over the home and the fields. It was suited to an agricultural people of simple habits, whose chief concerns were food, raiment, and social order. It was radically unsuited to a great empire, composed of many diverse peoples with differing backgrounds and standards, some of whom were highly cultivated and had behind them a long tradition of detached philosophic thought which had weakened or destroyed the religious beliefs of their ancestors. As the Roman state had grown, in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, the old local cults had, indeed, been transformed under the pressure of changed circumstances; but those cults had no possibilities of growth sufficient for the new situation. They tended to become meaningless superstitions, disguised under elaborate forms of ceremony; and they did not spread out from the imperial city, to absorb or displace the traditional local religions of Rome's subject peoples. In general it was the Roman policy to regard the religions of subject peoples as their own affair, or in other words to tolerate them, so long as the sovereign power of the state was not challenged. This might have been all very well, had it been possible to separate religion from the rest of life, and had local, traditional beliefs remained unaffected by the cosmopolitan civilization of Rome. Actually, however, religions were everywhere weakened, and Rome at first had nothing to offer in their place except some of the late fruits of Greek philosophic thought, satisfying in good times to a few fortunate and cultivated men, but empty for the majority.

At the beginning of the Christian era an attempt was made

to bring forward a new religion for the whole Empire, not expected so much to displace old ones as to supplement them and to direct the spirit of devotion towards a single object. This new religion was nothing other than the worship of the state itself, centered in the emperor regarded as a divine being who personified the power and majesty and beneficence of the greatest administrative and military organization the world had yet known. Worship of a reigning sovereign was not a new thing. It had been, indeed, a usual development in the ancient empires of the East, and in Egypt; and the movement to accord divine honors to the Roman state and its ruler was now in its beginnings a spontaneous expression of gratitude and reverence felt by Eastern peoples within the Empire. The earliest Roman emperors were genuinely reluctant to accept this handsome tribute, but could not forgo the advantages it promised. For the decline of traditional religious beliefs had been accompanied by widespread moral degeneration; and the very benefits of Roman rule, which were cultural and material, had encouraged men to believe that sensuous and sensual enjoyment was the one certain good to be got from life. Rome of course had not grown from an insignificant village under the guidance of men who loved luxury and fine food and wine above all else, and who lived to indulge and pamper their senses; and it was rightly felt that the Empire was doomed unless the spirit of devotion could be revitalized and directed towards the welfare of the state. The new state-religion was seized on as a means to this end, and as a means also of binding the peoples of the Empire into a closer, deeper unity. Determined "drives" were undertaken to enforce worship of the emperor, and along with them many severe edicts were promulgated to restore the old moral standards of the heroic age of Rome.

The whole effort was vain, because it was really political—statesmen trying to use for their secular purposes the outer forms of religion. It was a movement in the interest of the governing class and the rich. It could not be made to mean anything to the vast majority of those who peopled the Empire—a majority whose lives were increasingly insignificant, pinched, and hopeless. Moreover, not only the poor, the out-



cast, and the slaves, but many too amongst the prosperous were coming to see in the advantages of civilized life only a source of progressive disillusion. In other words, there was a growing conviction that if the good things of present earthly life were all men had to live for and hope for, life was a mockery and a meaningless curse.

Under these conditions, a gospel which gave every life a tremendous meaning and eternal value had a sure ground of appeal, and Gibbon, in his history of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has enumerated five causes which served most effectually to enhance that appeal:

I. The inflexible and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses. II. The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. III. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church. IV. The pure and austere morals of the Christians. V. The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire.

These causes for the rapid spread of Christianity through the Roman world were correctly singled out by Gibbon as the most important, but they are, of course, precisely what the great historian called them, "secondary causes." What filled the Christians with an inflexible and intolerant zeal? What promoted their pure and austere morals? What enabled them to attain the union and discipline requisite to their spiritual conquests? The crucial factor was their faith that Jesus was indeed the Christ. And this faith arose not primarily from his moral teaching. His evaluation of life was mature, disillusioned, and profound—hence in itself not well calculated to win immediate, general acceptance—and it was, moreover, not at all original. Hebrew and Christian scholars are today in substantial agreement about this: Every recorded saying of Jesus can be pretty closely matched from Rabbinic literature of his age or earlier. Jesus taught what the great teachers of his race and time were teaching;—yet somehow or other he

transformed their precepts, giving them a unique potency. He spoke "as one having authority," we are told; more than that—"never man spake like this man." And therein lies the secret of the matter: Jesus inspired unexampled trust because his nature and his way of life and death bespoke unexampled *character*. And if men would but put their faith in him, and would entrust themselves wholly to him, he promised, he would see them through.

What we must realize if we are to understand the early spread of Christianity is that men proceeded to do exactly this—and to find by experience that Jesus did not fail them, that the promise was kept. If this was delusion, it was delusion of an extraordinary kind. It is, in any event, the one foundation of the Christian Church. And historically it is not open to doubt that men found through Christ a new freedom, an enlarged sense of the possibilities of life, an inexhaustible field for significant achievement, a ground for hope—in a word, a deepened, sobered, spiritualized, enlightened humanity—such as had not previously been known in the ancient world.

From Gibbon's day and before until our own, many explanations have been advanced for the victory of the Christian faith; yet the simplest one remains still the best. Gibbon was right enough as far as he went; but, ultimately, Christianity triumphed because it presented to men, *and enabled them to realize in experience*, a truer, better humanity than had hitherto been conceived or seen.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEOLOGY

### Relation of Christianity to paganism

We have already noticed that the spread of Christianity depended upon the possibility of *interpreting* it to those who were to receive it. It so happened that the new religion could quite easily be understood—though of course not always in exactly the same ways—both by simple and ignorant men and by the best and most highly cultivated minds of the ancient world. It was seen to have points of contact, for example, both with popular mystery-religions, similar to those described at the end

of the preceding chapter, and with the philosophy of Plato, and with Stoicism. Within a very short period after the death of Jesus, Christianity was established in four great cities of the Empire—in Ephesus, in Antioch, in Alexandria, and in Rome. Undoubtedly it could not remain and flourish in such surroundings without receiving something from them as well as giving something to them. There is a good deal of difficulty in this question, and the tendency for some years has probably been to exaggerate the importance of what Christianity thus absorbed from the pagan world. The essential point to remember is that, while Christianity absorbed much, it nevertheless maintained its substantial identity and distinctiveness and continuity. In other words, it was not eaten up by the mystery-mongers and philosophers of antiquity, but, on the contrary, it ate them up, in so far as it found them digestible and nutritious, discarding the remainder.

St. Augustine, in his short treatise *On Christian Doctrine*, has fairly stated the general truth of this whole matter. He writes:

If those who are called philosophers, and especially the Platonists, have said aught that is true and in harmony with our faith, we are not only not to shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use from those who have unlawful possession of it. For, as the Egyptians had not only the idols and heavy burdens which the people of Israel hated and fled from, but also vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and garments, which the same people when going out of Egypt appropriated to themselves, designing them for a better use, not doing this on their own authority, but by the command of God, the Egyptians themselves, in their ignorance, providing them with things which they themselves were not making a good use of; in the same way all branches of heathen learning have not only false and superstitious fancies and heavy burdens of unnecessary toil, which every one of us, when going out under the leadership of Christ from the fellowship of the heathen, ought to abhor and avoid; but they contain also liberal instruction which is better adapted to the use of the truth, and some most excellent precepts of morality; and some truths in regard even to the worship of the One God are found amongst them. Now these are, so to speak, their gold and silver, which they did not create themselves, but dug out of the mines of God's providence which are everywhere scattered abroad, and



are perversely and unlawfully prostituting to the worship of devils.<sup>1</sup> These, therefore, the Christian, when he separates himself in spirit from the miserable fellowship of these men, ought to take away from them, and to devote to their proper use in preaching the gospel. Their garments also—that is, human institutions such as are adapted to that intercourse with men which is indispensable in this life—we must take and turn to a Christian use.

In becoming, then, the religion of the Roman Empire, Christianity made nowhere an absolute break with the traditions, the culture, the science and philosophy, the usages, and the institutions of the pagan peoples. It assimilated them to itself, remaking them in so far as that was possible and desirable. And thus *philosophy* was gradually remade into *theology*.

#### **Fundamentals of Christian belief as set forth by Paul**

The beginnings of the process just mentioned are to be seen in the New Testament itself, in the Gospel of St. John and in the writings of St. Paul. Paul gives us, in effect, the earliest known attempt to place Christianity in a universalized setting, and since much in his account has remained permanently a part of orthodox belief, it may briefly be summarized here: Christ is a divine being, the only begotten Son of God, through whom, as agent, the earth and all that it inhabit, and the heaven above the earth, and the regions below were created. The first man, like the earth, was created good, and the lord of creation, but with freedom to obey or disobey his creator. He disobeyed, thus bringing sin and death into the world, and corrupting not his own nature only, but the whole human race along with him. As a consequence, the propensity to sin became man's second nature, rendering vain all his endeavors and aspirations to truth and goodness, and placing him always in opposition to God and God's will. Because, however, of his concern for man, God's Son laid aside his divine form and became a man and submitted to death on the cross, thus making atonement for the sinfulness of humanity. Christ's death is potentially the death of all men—his resurrection potentially the triumph of

<sup>1</sup>Like the Zoroastrians, the Christians regarded pagan deities as devils, or malign demons, in masquerade—the disguise enabling them to mislead and plague their votaries.

all men over sin and death, in eternal life. But only those are saved through Christ who are so united to him by faith that they may be regarded as crucified with him in their old selves, and risen with him, or born again, as purified beings.

Thus the death of Christ in expiation for human sinfulness, and his resurrection, giving men eternal life, are the central factors in Christianity as Paul understood it. To complete our summary, however, it must be added that, following the resurrection, Christ ascended into Heaven, where he occupies a place of enhanced glory because of his voluntary redemption of men, and whence he will come on the day of final judgment to convey those who are saved to their heavenly and eternal home.

Paul did not forget, in drawing out this scheme of God's relations with man, that to Moses had been given the Law, by perfect obedience to which man might redeem himself, without the aid of a Mediator or Savior; nor did he forget that even the Gentiles, through their own rational powers, could learn, and had learned, what it was necessary to do for salvation—"for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."<sup>1</sup> The fact was, however, that both Hebrews and Gentiles, because of the corruptness of human nature since the first man, could not perform what was necessary for salvation, no matter how fully they *knew* what to do; so that both were really in a worse state with their knowledge than they would have been without it—both were only the more clearly "without excuse."

The necessity, therefore, of the Redeemer, if men were to be saved, was complete. But only those could be saved, even so, who were united to Christ, as was said above, by faith—and such union henceforth took the place of the old Judaic Law, which expired with the coming of Christ. The question still remained, how could man avail himself of redemption, how could he summon faith? Concerning this, Paul is not clear. Perhaps unconsciously, he entertained more than one answer

<sup>1</sup>Romans, 1:20.

to the question. He sometimes said that the office of the Law and of rational philosophy had been to awaken men, through conscience, to such a sense of their sinfulness and hopeless condition that, when Christ came, they might be impelled from within to put their trust wholly in him, and so to identify themselves with him and really be made one with him. At other times, however, Paul felt that man, because of his corruptness, could do nothing for himself, and that even the exercise of saving faith was possible only to those upon whom God had bestowed it. In other words, God had from the beginning—for some reason best known to Himself—created some men for eternal life, and others, a larger number, for damnation: "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified."<sup>1</sup>

It remains to mention Paul's teaching concerning the sacraments. A sacrament is "the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace." Paul deals with two—Baptism and the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper—both already firmly established in the earliest years of the Church. In baptism, he says, we "put on Christ." "The immersion in the water and the emergence are not merely typical of our participation in the death and resurrection of Christ but do in some mysterious manner effect that participation; we are baptized 'into Christ,' 'buried with him,' and with him 'raised up from the dead'; we are 'crucified with him,' and 'if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him.' We no longer live to ourselves, but to Christ; rather, Christ lives in us. By the same extension the eucharist becomes, as it were, a renewal and perpetuation of the mystical union accomplished in baptism."<sup>2</sup> And in the eating of the bread, and in the drinking of the wine, the communicant partakes of the body and the blood of Christ—not of substances which symbolically stand for the body and blood, but actually and literally of the body and blood themselves.

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<sup>1</sup>Romans, 8: 30.

<sup>2</sup>P. E. More, *The Christ of the New Testament* (Princeton University Press, 1924), p. 196.



**The integration of Christianity with world thought**

In following years the effort was continually renewed to define precisely the essential doctrine of the Church, and to build up a rational theology which should give Christian belief a secure foundation in demonstrable truth. The Church was under the necessity not only of meeting attacks from representatives of pagan philosophy, but also of confuting and quelling numerous heretical movements which arose from within its confines. The definition of essential doctrine reached its final stage in A. D. 451, at the Council of Chalcedon, when it was affirmed that Christ united in his one person both a perfect divinity and a complete humanity. In Asia Minor and in Greece there was no considerable development of Christian philosophy after this time. In the West, within the Roman Church, the most influential figure after the age of the Apostles was St. Augustine (354-430), who was converted to Christianity after becoming a student of Neoplatonism, and was in fact converted partly through Neoplatonism, in which he found every article of Christian belief, he said, except Christ himself. He contributed powerfully to make the doctrine of the Neoplatonists the philosophy of the Western Church; and, in addition, he took up and elaborated the doctrine of grace, or of predestination—whose earliest appearance we have noticed in the writings of St. Paul—and secured the formal acceptance of this doctrine in the Roman Church. It did not long maintain itself undiluted, however, and gradually sank from importance.

In the work of Augustine we see an effort being made, on the whole with striking success, to understand Christianity in terms of the best thought of the age. There were from the beginning certain fixed points of Christian belief; but from that time to the close of the Middle Ages there was a constant effort to preserve intellectual unity by interpreting and reinterpreting Christianity, without deserting its essential affirmations, so as to preserve harmony with existing science and philosophy. There was a great heightening of this effort during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and it reached its culmination in the

philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), which is one of the finest intellectual achievements of Western civilization, and which remains to this day the accepted philosophy of the Roman Catholic Church. Not long before the time of Aquinas the work of Aristotle, after having been lost to Europe for many centuries, had again become known; and it was this which impelled St. Thomas and several predecessors to reconstruct Christian philosophy in the light of what was to them new and important knowledge.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

In the beginning each community in which Christianity was established had its own church, which was independent of all others, though there was frequent communication from one church to another. At the head of each church was an overseer or bishop. From a very early time certain bishops tended, simply from the importance of their geographical position, to assume posts of leadership. All arrangements at first were, however, very informal, loose, and democratic.

#### **Rome first opposes then embraces Christianity**

Christians were held together sufficiently by the fact that their belief set them apart very markedly from the pagan inhabitants of their communities. Converts were, moreover, immediately faced with the possibility of trouble arising from their enforced refusal to join in worship of the Roman emperor. Imperial officials found it difficult or impossible to understand this, if they even tried, and the refusal was construed as an act of rebellion—more or less important according to local circumstances. This was, and remained constantly, the focal point of trouble between the Christians and the Empire. A genuinely analogous case in some respects is that of the so-called “conscientious objector” during the World War. Christians were also, however, in some other ways a “peculiar people,” as officials discovered when their attention was directed to them; and because their beliefs and practices were strange, and ill-understood, rumors easily arose, and were some-

times credited, that the converts were addicted to barbarous or unnatural deeds, or that they really constituted a secret political society carrying on a propaganda against the government. Hence for several centuries the Christians were subject to sporadic, local campaigns of persecution, now in one province, now in another. Decius was the first emperor (A. D. 250) to set on foot an organized campaign against Christians extending throughout the Empire. From 260 to 303, Christianity enjoyed practically complete toleration. In the latter year Diocletian inaugurated a new campaign—the last great persecution and by much the most severe of all of them.

The number of Christians who died for their faith rather than offer a sacrifice or burn incense before an "idolatrous" image or the portrait of an emperor cannot be known. It was smaller than was once supposed, but large enough to make a great impression on contemporary society and also to make adherence to the new faith, very frequently, an act of extreme heroism. What relation this had to the growth of the religion it is difficult to say, though probably it promoted the purity, austerity, close union, and strict discipline of the converts, and so aided in the spread of Christianity. By the beginning of the fourth century it had spread throughout society and throughout the Empire, and had won adherents in the families of emperors. In 311 an edict of toleration was promulgated, and in 313 Christianity was placed in a position of complete equality with other religions. Ten years later a Christian, Constantine, became sole emperor, and thereafter all emperors save Julian (reigned 361–363) were Christians. Before the close of the fourth century, heathen worship was officially forbidden, and Christianity thus made the religion of the Empire.

This triumph, which would have been incredible to Christians of the first and second centuries, has sometimes been described as a blow from which the Christian religion has never recovered. Immediately the whole character of the Church was transformed. It had been a voluntary society, whose membership was solely composed of those with sufficient faith



and zeal to brave worldly disadvantage, persecution, even death. Henceforth the Church was an organic part of the State, and it became not only a worldly advantage for all men to declare themselves Christians, but a necessity, because paganism and even unorthodox beliefs were soon made crimes punishable with death. Thus the Church was instantly overrun by hordes of men and women who were Christians only in name. And this necessitated compromises with the spirit of worldliness, and brought the Church at once into the sordid field of practical politics. The most conspicuous results were that the great offices of the Church, now made great offices of the State also, which conferred wealth and power on their holders, became objects of worldly ambition; furthermore, qualifications for membership in the Church now began to be reduced to ritual observances and formal declarations of belief, and the Christian life was externalized in rules of action defined as sharply and simply as possible. These rules were not easy to obey, but full obedience was hardly expected. What was rigidly demanded was submission—and acceptance of penalties for disobedience. The Church, in other words, claimed absolute authority over the personal lives and even the opinions of all human beings within the State; yet in practice men were accepted much as they were, provided they were outwardly submissive in matters of belief.

#### **Papal supremacy and Church unity in the West**

The great change in the official position of Christianity was accompanied, not alone by a transformation in the Church's character, but also by far-reaching changes in its organization. Christianity, now the religion of the State, began to assume new dignity of outward form, along with the responsibilities entailed by its new position. Administrative machinery was necessarily elaborated and tightened. Gradually a few bishops came to occupy positions of leadership which made them natural centers of authority and of administration. From the beginning the church of Rome, the one church of apostolic foundation and at the same time the church of the first imperial capital, was the great center of Christianity in the West, and

it came very early to be looked on as the center of all Christendom. The primacy of the Bishop of Rome was officially acknowledged as early as 381. The removal of the Western capital from Rome did not lessen the prestige of the city, and enhanced both the prestige and the responsibilities of the bishop. With the overthrow of the Western Empire (A. D. 476), the Bishop of Rome became practically the heir of the imperial administration, while the Western Church became the custodian of the old civilization and culture. Final separation of the Western Church from the Eastern, after having been many times threatened, came in 1054, when the Pope, as the bishop of Rome had come to be called, formally excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople—and was in turn immediately anathematized by the latter. On the part of the Pope this was an act, not of primacy, but of supremacy—and supremacy over Christendom had in fact long before been claimed by the Pope. The coronation of Charlemagne by Pope Leo III in 800 was later regarded as an act denoting the supremacy of papal authority, though it was not so understood by contemporaries, and it was not until the time of Gregory VII (Pope, 1073–1085) that papal supremacy over both Church and State was claimed without qualification. And the actual climax of acknowledged papal supremacy came with the reign of Innocent III (1198–1216).

By this time the Roman Church had become an immensely powerful institution, penetrating and vitally affecting the whole life of the peoples of Western Europe. The extent and importance of this influence, and likewise the virtual freedom of ecclesiastics from secular domination, have been described in an earlier chapter.<sup>1</sup> Here we can only describe briefly the means by which clerical power made itself felt. The long struggle for papal supremacy was really a struggle to preserve, in the one way possible in the existing circumstances, the unity and freedom of the Church. As the Church expanded, authority was more and more centered in one person, the Bishop of Rome, and all other ecclesiastics came more and more to hold their positions as his delegates or representatives.

<sup>1</sup>Chapter 10, pp. 272 ff.

Thus all Europe was portioned off into dioceses, each ruled over by a bishop whose appointment had to be confirmed by Rome; and each diocese was divided into parishes with their own priests acting as spiritual directors of the lay folk. This far-reaching organization was bound together as tightly as might be by dependence at every point upon its one Head. It was not, however, the Church's only means of holding its place in the world. It was supplemented by the *monastic orders*.

### Monasticism and otherworldliness

We have already seen that the primitive Christian viewpoint was distinctly *otherworldly*. To attain salvation man was bidden to turn away from the affairs of this life, to renounce wealth, and social position, and even, at need, the closest ties of family, in order to devote himself wholly to things eternal and spiritual. When Christianity became the religion, not of a few heroic souls willing to be separated from their communities as a "peculiar people," but of those communities themselves in their entirety, otherworldliness took on, of necessity, a different aspect. It was essential to Christianity; it could not be abandoned; but neither could it be required uncompromisingly of everybody. Hence as the Church succeeded in the world, and perforce grew more worldly, numbers of the most earnest Christians, sometimes to express their disapproval, withdrew from society to form communities apart where they could continue undistracted to practice the severest renunciation. Thus they perpetuated the primitive Christian viewpoint, even though the Church itself was deserting it. But the Church soon realized that monastic societies could serve useful purposes, and made a place for them within the ecclesiastical framework, or organization. And gradually, from this start, there was developed the Roman Catholic conception of human society as an organism—as a united whole in which the several members performed differing functions in accordance with their abilities. Just as, within the body of the individual, the heart does one thing, the stomach another, the brain still another, and so on, yet all are equally necessary for life; so within society, it came to be believed, one man may be called



to renounce the world, and another to labor in it, yet both for the greater glory of God and each usefully to the other.

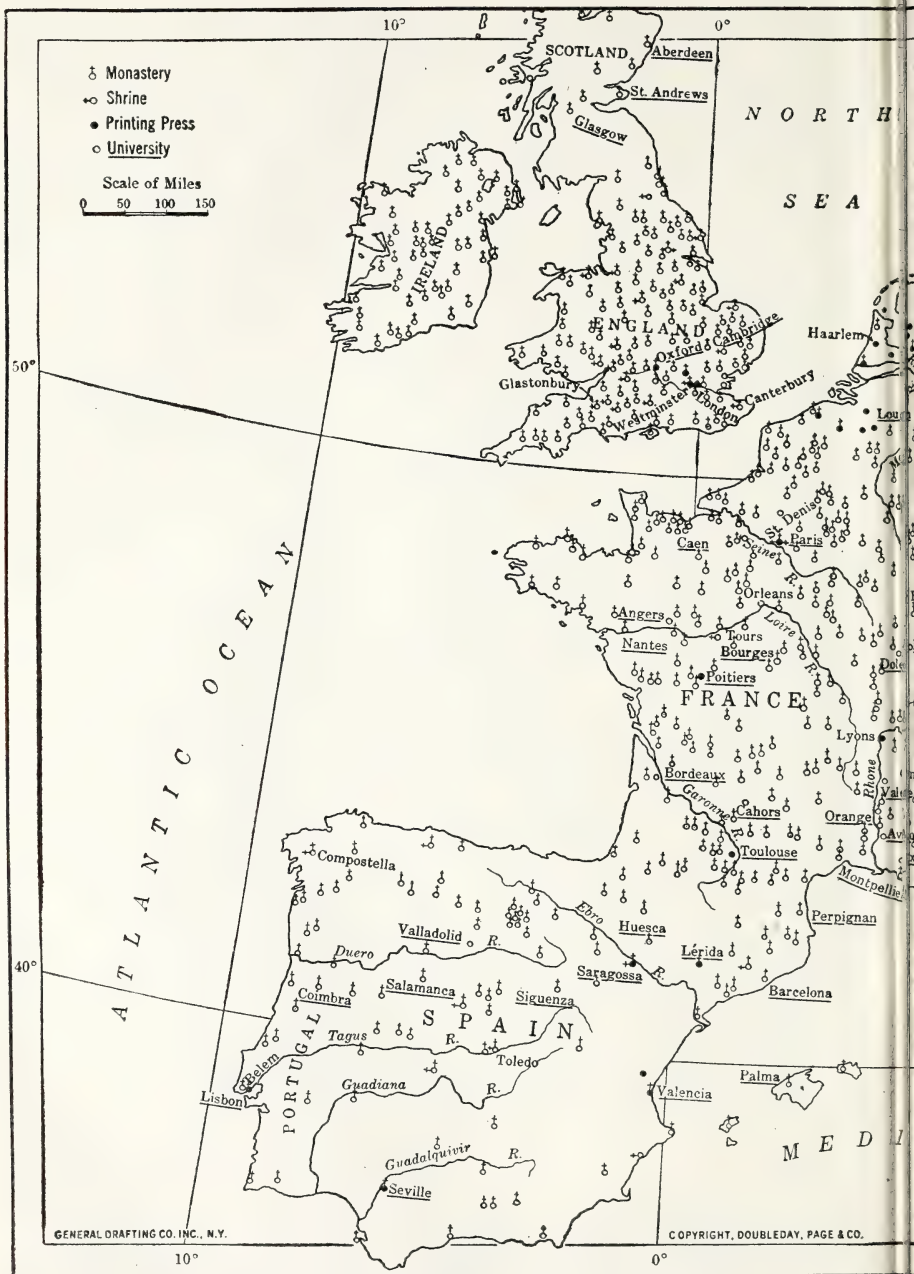
Thus both men and women who felt called to the most complete otherworldliness were, in a sense, made use of, while the Church as a whole accommodated itself more and more to the ways of the world. One who renounced the world might well do so just because he knew himself to be a weaker man than his brother who remained in the world. He chose the better way; but it was never thought that all could do so or should. Through renunciation, moreover, he sought not merely his own salvation, but that of others; for it was believed that the saint contributed to the Church's treasury of merit which could be drawn on to aid in the salvation of the sinful.

Those who withdrew from the world at first lived in solitude as hermits, but very early found it expedient to associate themselves with one another, and this was the beginning of *monasticism*. The monastic movement had assumed definite form by the third century, and in the East reached a settled form with acceptance of the rules made by St. Basil (c. 330-379). In the West settled organization came later, under the guidance of St. Benedict (c. 480-543). Thenceforward throughout the Middle Ages the movement continued to grow, attracting thousands of men and women, each of whom took perpetual vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience. Though some failed to lead the saintly lives to which they were vowed, still, in general, the monks and nuns formed an army of unique power working singleheartedly for the extension of Christendom and for the renewal, in each generation, of living Christian faith. As one example of the service performed through monastic discipline, it may be mentioned that the Benedictine Order alone gave the Church some twenty-four Popes and no less than 4600 archbishops and bishops.

### Religious functions of the Church

The secular clergy, as the parish priests were called, and the monastic clergy comprised a great society—a world of their own within the world—giving undivided allegiance to their common head, the Pope, and standing as sole mediators





22. MAP OF WESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE, SHOWING PRINCIPAL SHRINES ABOUT 1000 YEARS OLD





PRINTING PRESSES, MONASTERIES, UNIVERSITIES, AND PRINTING PRESSES FROM ABOUT 1500



between God and man. For it was taught and believed that only through the offices of the Church could men hope to win salvation and that eternal heavenly life which was pictured as the goal of humanity's earthly probation. The Church, consequently, as has already been said, claimed to be, and was accepted as being, the one authoritative guardian of faith and morals; and its exclusive power of direction could be exercised, and often was exercised, in every sphere of life from birth to death. In addition, moreover, the Church was the one channel through which God's grace was communicated to men, especially through the sacraments, which came to be seven in number, and which touched life at every crucial point. They were: Immediately after birth, *Baptism*, opening the Church's gates to man and constituting, symbolically, a second spiritual birth, which at the same time washed away the taint of Adam's sin; *Confirmation*, which completed, in youth, man's entrance into the Church, and came to aid him just when he might most need help against evil temptation; *Marriage*, which blessed the union of man and wife, giving it full religious sanction, and rendering it indissoluble; *Penance*, through which absolution might be obtained for sins committed; the *Eucharist*, which reunited the penitent with God through Christ; *Extreme Unction*, which finally cleansed the soul from sin and fortified it at its last earthly crisis, when facing imminent death; and *Holy Order*, through which bishops ordained priests, thus conferring on them an indelible character. A similar property was attached to Baptism and Confirmation, so that these, and the sacrament of Order, once obtained, could never be received again. Repentance and Communion, however, man stood in constant need of throughout life, so that the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist were repeated frequently.

While these were the recognized channels through which grace was communicated to man, provided he interposed no obstacle, and were hence made obligatory, the Church instituted many lesser observances and encouraged many forms of devotion which cannot even be mentioned here, but which tended to bring the whole life of man under its sway. At the same time, it was active in exacting their minimal Christian obligations



from those who were inclined to be rebellious; and it claimed and received the aid of secular rulers when it became necessary to use force in quelling rebellion or in administering punishment. It has to be remembered in this connection that, as has been explained above, Christianity had become the religion of the State, that it was in no sense a voluntary society during the Middle Ages, and that disobedience was inevitably regarded much as men in the North regarded Southern secession at the time of the American Civil War. Amongst the Church's resources when ordinary methods of discipline failed, or when extreme cases of disobedience arose, were the *Inquisition*, a court of inquiry which imposed the death penalty on thousands convicted of obstinate heresy; *Excommunication*, which rendered its victim an outlaw and was sometimes, under medieval conditions of life, a penalty worse than immediate death; and the *Crusade*, or war of extermination directed against whole communities known to be heretical.

### CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

It should be obvious from what has been said about the essential nature of Christianity that, in so far as its precepts should be carried out in action, it would exert a pronounced—even, indeed, a revolutionary—influence upon social life. It should be equally obvious that medieval Christianity did exert a pervasive, unescapable influence throughout society, but not a revolutionary one. Reasons for this have been suggested above, in our brief account of the rise of monasticism. The monasteries represent the only instances known to history of successful communism; yet they were not, of course, instituted as a means of promoting social reform, or as examples of an ideal to be aimed at by those living in the world. Christians who did not feel called to renounce the world were encouraged to detach themselves *inwardly* from it as much as possible, to keep themselves from being enslaved by its distractions, by its burdens, by its snares for enlisting ambition and for raising up pride;—they were encouraged, in brief, to live as men not of the world, though in it. And evidently, to the extent that

Christians could so live, a most important change must have resulted in the spirit of men's dealings with one another, and equally in the character of social life.

No revolution of the kind really occurred during the Middle Ages, nevertheless, for the simple reason that the great majority of men could never rise to the level of genuine inward detachment. It is, however, not in the least open to doubt that faithfulness to this teaching, on the part of all men, would straightway bring about a social revolution, resulting in universal social welfare. Yet such a revolution would not abolish either poverty or wealth; nor would it, if it brought any important changes in the social order, promote equalitarianism. And even the social welfare which it would insure would be strictly a by-product. For the one vital matter from the traditional Christian viewpoint is the character, the real inward state, of the individual; and the inward change promoted by Christianity is conducive to social welfare precisely because the regenerate or twice-born man is personally indifferent to those elements of material well-being which strike the "natural" or once-born man as being the most important factors in life. The "natural man" is always likely to assume, furthermore, that he is in a perfectly satisfactory inward condition, and that what is needed for happiness is greater respect, on the part of all others, for his "rights," as he calls them without really knowing what he is saying. The regenerate man, on the other hand, knows that no human being is in a satisfactory inward condition, and determines that, regardless of others, he personally must keep trying to be honest, to be just, to be faithful in performing his duties, at no matter what cost to himself.

The distinction here drawn is apparently not easy for people nowadays to understand. It is, however, necessary to grasp it, if one is to see Christianity as it was in the beginning and in the Middle Ages, and as it is today when it has not departed from its early and historic character. For historic Christianity is not a gospel of social welfare or of social reform as those terms are practically always used in our time. The notion that happiness is attainable on earth, save by anticipation of the immortal, blessed life of the soul, is foreign to historic Chris-

tianity. The notion that man can, through the exercise of his own power and intelligence, so alter the conditions of existence as to make our world an earthly paradise is foreign to historic Christianity. And the notion, consequently, that such effort is the proper work of man, through which he develops and realizes his true self and accomplishes the purpose for which he exists, is equally foreign to historic Christianity.

Devotion to earthly well-being is in fact the antithesis of that which, through the centuries, Christianity has stood for. The conception of "the world" entertained by the earliest Christians was, to be sure, very different from that accepted during the Middle Ages and, in essentials, by modern Roman Catholicism. The practical inference made, however, was the same: The world must go as it will; the true Christian's real concern is not with the improvement of earthly life, but with heavenly things.

This is not to say that the true Christian is or should be indifferent nowadays to the improvement of earthly life. But it is necessary to emphasize the subordinate and *sometimes* quite unessential character of earthly well-being from the historic Christian viewpoint. The whole problem turns upon the end for which man lives and in terms of which all else must be judged. And Christianity in its beginnings and through many centuries was like other religions, autonomous; it was held to have its own distinct sphere of work and belief; it conceived the prime object of humanity to be the attainment of peace—that peace which passeth understanding—through union with ultimate Reality, which in turn it conceived to be immaterial, divine, and eternally existent in a realm other than this sensible world of our present life; and it judged all things else accordingly as they might be useful or not useful for this object. The world of our present life is a mixed world; though divinely created, according to the Christian view, and full of heavenly suggestions for those with eyes to see, it is also transitory, corrupt, and restless—in a state of perpetual change and tension—as we ourselves are. And the historic Christian belief is, that as long as it remains, it will remain essentially as it is. Hence Christians have felt convinced that peace can come to



man, never from immersing himself in earthly concerns, making himself their creature or slave, no matter how excellent his intentions in so doing, but only from breaking through the bars of illusion which imprison him on earth, from putting off the shackles of mortality, and from putting on "incorruption"—which is to say, uniting himself with the timeless realm of immaterial reality.

Today it is often contended that man is unable to put off the shackles of mortality when oppressed by poverty, when the victim of injustice, when borne down by disease, when compelled to make war against his fellows, and the like; but this is to assert what early and medieval Christianity, and indeed what history in every part of our world, has repeatedly demonstrated to be false. Suffering, on the contrary, is precisely that which again and again has most clearly shown, as we say, what a man is good for. And the traditional Christian viewpoint has been that the lessons suffering teaches, it alone can teach; that without them we are utterly unable to realize and fulfill our humanity; and that what we know of human steadfastness, courage, dignity, nobility, and heroism, we know solely through its instrumentality.

It is, then, because of the conviction that the world is our place of probation and growth—not our resting place or home—and because social reform, as the term is nowadays used, does not point beyond material well-being and earthly ease as its goal, that historic Christianity has been consistently indifferent to clamor for social revolution, while always encouraging individual philanthropy, the performance of kindly and merciful works, issuing from brotherly love—which is not love unless it is personal, and which cannot be expressed save through personal ministrations.

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## CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN SOCIETY

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**S**T. AUGUSTINE wrote, in the treatise *On Christian Doctrine* from which a passage was quoted in the preceding chapter:

To enjoy a thing is to rest with satisfaction in it for its own sake. To use, on the other hand, is to employ whatever means are at one's disposal to obtain what one desires, if it is a proper object of desire; for an unlawful use ought rather to be called an abuse. Suppose, then, we were wanderers in a strange country, and could not live happily away from our fatherland, and that we felt wretched in our wandering and, wishing to put an end to our misery, determined to return home. We find, however, that we must make use of some mode of conveyance, either by land or water, in order to reach that fatherland where our enjoyment is to commence. But the beauty of the country through which we pass, and the very pleasure of the motion, charm our hearts, and turning these things which we ought to use into objects of enjoyment, we become unwilling to hasten the end of our journey; and becoming engrossed in a factitious delight, our thoughts are diverted from that home whose delights would make us truly happy. Such is a picture of our condition in this life of mortality. We have wandered far from God; and if we wish to return to our Father's home, this world must be used, not enjoyed, that so the invisible things of God may be clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made—that is, that by means of what is material and temporary we may lay hold upon that which is spiritual and eternal.

These words very exactly define the Christian attitude towards life. It has been, as we have earlier explained, *other-*



*worldly*. Augustine makes it clear that otherworldliness is not by any means the same thing as asceticism. It may lead to asceticism, as when Jesus bids his followers cut off a hand or pluck out an eye, if necessary, rather than become enslaved by sin. This, however, is an exceptional and desperate remedy for a well-nigh hopeless condition. Yet otherworldliness, while it should not be confused with asceticism, does signify a life of detachment from earthly concerns—a life purged of self-seeking, of worldly ambition, of wandering desires, a disciplined life, a life of devotion to spiritual ends. And such lives have been led by some Christians in every generation from the first century of our era to the present day; and the Church in every generation has proved itself a true home for those Christians, and a source of ever-renewed strength.

#### HUMAN ELEMENTS AS A CORRODING INFLUENCE IN THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

This fact should be particularly remembered as we proceed. For Christianity, once founded, could only be preserved amongst men by being entrusted to the care of men themselves—imperfect, erring, selfish, sinful, ambitious men. During the first few centuries, to be sure, the consequences of this were not apparent, because selfish and ambitious men were not attracted to ecclesiastical careers when the Christians were few and obscure and when they were often called on to face martyrdom. But when Christianity became the one religion of Europe, the Church became, as we have already said, a great world in itself—a vast and complex organization, with posts at the top of much power and dignity, with growing wealth, and with a place in society to render secure and to heighten when possible. At the same time, this organization had to deal mostly with barbarians, which means that it had to develop strength of a kind that barbarians could feel, that it had to be frequently dictatorial or harshly assertive—as one has to be when dealing with children—that it had to devise awe-inspiring methods of correction or punishment, and that it had to adopt some of the ways of those with whom it dealt. No institution can rise

above the level of those who direct it. An institution such as the Roman Catholic Church became during the Middle Ages is necessarily, in its personnel, a cross section of society, including all kinds of people, good, bad, and indifferent, and affording many opportunities for corrupt practices.

Those opportunities, as time went on, were made the most of. The Church of the later Middle Ages was proud, headstrong, fiercely intolerant, and thoroughly corrupt. Great ecclesiastics occupied positions in society indistinguishable from those of noblemen or kings; and when the revival of classical studies in Italy became unmistakably a secular attempt to enrich earthly life, in all directions suggested by ancient pagan civilization, the movement found generous patrons and enthusiastic disciples amongst the princes of the Church and on the papal throne. And though the Church had become wealthy—in various parts of Europe it was estimated that not less than one-third of the land had gradually fallen into its hands—still, the popes remained continually in want of money, and were ready to adopt any likely means of getting it.

### THE GROWING OPPOSITION TO THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

It was primarily the question of money—the root of all evil<sup>1</sup>—which brought about the secession usually referred to as the Protestant Reformation. From the very beginning the Church had had to contend against movements of revolt or dissension. Some of these had assumed the most serious proportions. In general, however, they had, in the end, been either crushed or absorbed. Before the sixteenth century the only great division in Christendom that promised to be permanent was the one between the Eastern churches and Rome, mentioned in the last chapter. Following upon that, especially from the twelfth century on, there had been a long succession of attempts at change or reform which had in one way or another been disposed of. Taking them as a whole, they may fairly be regarded as signs of vitality, and they were certainly, as heretical movements of the earliest centuries had been, instruments of

<sup>1</sup>Timothy, 6: 10.

growth. To mention a single example, feelings of deep dissatisfaction with conditions in the Church were responsible, at the close of the twelfth century, for two quite similar movements of reform, one of which, receiving papal approval, resulted in the formation of the Franciscan order—while the other, failing to receive it, perhaps only because it was the earlier, became a troublesome heretical sect, known as the Waldensians.

The absorption of the Franciscans shows, however, that, while the Church was ready to make a place for them within its many-sided, complex structure, and to benefit by their piety and zeal, it could not be itself changed in spirit by their example. This great organization had, in fact, acquired a settled character and a momentum of its own, too strong to be altered by any one person or group of persons. It had never forgotten the real reason for its existence, but it had also attained a place of dominance in worldly affairs, and this it was prepared to retain at any cost.

It had, consequently, nothing but opposition for John Wiclif (c. 1324–1384) in England when he expressly challenged the Church's earthly powers and greed for money. Wiclif boldly declared that the Pope, by acquiring worldly power and seeking always to increase it, had become the representative on earth, not of Christ, but of the spirit of Antichrist. For confirmation he appealed directly to the Bible as the one final source of authority for Christians, asserting that in so far as popes and other ecclesiastics had departed from the Bible they had become guilty of heresy. On Biblical grounds he also attacked the doctrine of transubstantiation,<sup>1</sup> accepting in its place that of the real presence—the doctrine that the body and blood of Christ are genuinely present in the eucharist, but only in some fashion which resists definition.

There was no possible way in which the Church could absorb the teaching of Wiclif. Though he had no thought of with-

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<sup>1</sup>This is the Catholic doctrine that the whole *substance*—though not, of course, the *attributes*, such as appearance, taste, odor—of the eucharistic bread and wine is converted into the body and blood respectively of Christ. "Substance" and "attribute," as used to define transubstantiation, are terms of scholastic philosophy.



drawing from it, he called, as things were, not for reform, but for a revolution. He was accordingly attacked, but was protected from physical harm by certain powerful English families, in grateful return for the aid his teaching gave in their resistance to temporal claims of the Church. During the half-century after his death, however, his English followers, the Lollards, were killed or forced into hiding and his followers in Bohemia, whither his doctrine had quickly spread, were likewise rooted out. Their leader, John Hus, was burned at the stake in 1415, and many of the rank and file were killed in the Bohemian civil war of 1434.

## THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

### Beginning and spread of the Protestant Movement

During the remainder of the fifteenth century there were no important outbreaks against the papacy. There were, on the contrary, many indications that the power and prestige of Rome were increasing, and that the need for thoroughgoing reform was being recognized, especially in Spain and Italy, by highly placed churchmen who might reasonably be expected to accomplish it in time. In 1510, however, Pope Julius II, in order to raise money for the rebuilding of the Church of St. Peter at Rome, initiated a campaign for the sale of indulgences.<sup>1</sup> This campaign was continued by Leo X, the successor of Julius, with the consequence that in 1515 a Dominican friar named Tetzel undertook to sell indulgences in a region near Wittenberg, in northern Germany. The actions and reported

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<sup>1</sup>An indulgence is "a remission of the punishment which is still due to sin after sacramental absolution, this remission being valid in the court of conscience and before God, and being made by an application of the treasure of the Church on the part of a lawful superior." (*Catholic Dict.* quoted in N. E. D.) The indulgences offered by Julius II, however, conveyed a plenary remission of all sins under certain conditions, and were applicable both to living people and to souls then in purgatory. The "treasure" referred to in the above definition is, so to say, an over-balance of "merit," created by acts of extraordinary piety, which may be drawn on by the Church for the benefit of sinful but repentant persons. The theory of the indulgence, when carefully stated by a theologian, is one thing; the popular conception of the indulgence, in the Middle Ages and later, as practically a license to sin in safety, purchasable for so much cash, was something else—a scandalous abuse, tacitly or openly fostered by those who had the task of selling the documents in any way they could.

words of Tetzels aroused the indignant opposition of Martin Luther (1483-1546), a priest and professor of philosophy at the University of Wittenberg, and caused him, on 31 October, 1517, to post on the door of the castle church ninety-five theses against the sale of indulgences.

Luther had no notion what the ultimate consequences of his action were to be. He was, however, a headstrong man; he found himself at once involved in violent controversy; and he grew bolder with each new pamphlet he wrote against his opponents. He soon discovered, moreover, that he had become the leader of a widespread popular movement, which had needed only a spark to set it off—a movement of revolt, having the active sympathy of princes, against the oppressive extortions of the papacy. He was regarded as a new power raised up against clerical abuses, and this indeed he was; but in several of his original theses he had directly questioned the power of the Pope, and as he developed his position he rapidly went as far as Wiclif had gone in the way of making any compromise impossible.

The result was that in 1520 a papal bull was issued, condemning propositions drawn from Luther's writings, directing that those writings should be burned, and giving their author sixty days within which to recant. Luther answered by openly burning the bull, together with books by his opponents, and by publishing a tract *Against the Bull of the Antichrist*. He was duly excommunicated, but this did not diminish his following, though even as late as 1530 his followers wished not to secede from the Church, but only to bring about its reformation. It was a vain desire, and finally in 1555 the right of the new religion to separate existence was conceded—not, of course, by the Pope, but by the diet of the Holy Roman Empire.

Luther, in contesting the authority of the Pope, had been drawn on from one position to another, until he rested in the assertion that final authority was vested in the word of God itself and also, in effect, in the conscience of each believer. This was the position that Protestants in general took—and very soon Protestants were to be found throughout Northern Europe. Lutheranism was established in place of Catholicism

in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden by 1537. In 1522 a successful Protestant movement was inaugurated by Huldreich Zwingli at Zürich, in Switzerland, which spread rapidly to the other cantons of German Switzerland, and also to cities in southern Germany. By 1525 Protestantism had made such headway in France that a campaign of persecution was then undertaken against it; but Protestants continued nevertheless to increase in number there, though not winning a recognized position until much later, and then only temporarily. In 1536 John Calvin (1509-1564), after Luther the greatest of the leaders of the Reformation, and the founder of Presbyterianism, took up his work in Geneva, making that city the center of the reformed churches of France and of French Switzerland, and also the fountainhead of Dutch, English, and Scottish Protestantism.

#### **Character and extent of the change**

It might reasonably have been supposed, when the movement had gone thus far with the greatest rapidity, that its further progress would be inevitable, and irresistible, and that the Roman Catholic Church was doomed. In fact, however, Protestantism made but little further progress. It never penetrated southern Europe or southern Ireland, and it later tended to recede in France, and in the nineteenth century scarcely held its own in England. Protestantism, it is true, has been carried into all parts of the earth by colonization and missions, but so, equally, has Catholicism—and the Roman Catholic Church remains today the Church of the majority of Christians.

The doctrinal aspect of Protestantism is not a matter of the greatest importance. In general its leaders professed to be returning to primitive Christianity, clearing away the vast accumulation of errors, abuses, and unjustifiable changes which Rome had gradually introduced. This attempt, however, was bound to fail, as are all attempts to restore "the good old times." Actually, the Reformers were much influenced by medieval mysticism, by scholasticism, by the revival of classical studies, and by Roman absolutism, as well as by fresh study of



the Bible. Protestant theology was Pauline and Augustinian in character, and Calvin is in this direction chiefly remarkable for the length to which he went in making explicit the consequences of the doctrine of unqualified or absolute predestination. Oliver Wendell Holmes, it may be recalled, did not see how a man could understandingly accept this doctrine and remain sane, inasmuch as it seems, on its face, to make God a monster and human life meaningless. The doctrine asserts, briefly, that the whole course of every human life is completely determined in advance by the Deity, so that all of us are completely helpless in our acts and even thoughts; and this means, of course, that God is alleged to bring thousands of human beings to life for no purpose except to consign them to eternal punishment. But, while Protestant theology was forced to take an extreme position on this and on a few other questions around which controversy was made to center, on the whole it remained identical with Roman Catholic theology, alike in its authoritative sources and in its development.

In almost every direction, indeed, the differences between the two camps, of which so much was made, were differences of detail rather than of fundamental principle. Protestantism, for example, took over completely the medieval Catholic conception of society as an organic body under the control of the Deity through both Church and State, and no Protestants in the seventeenth century except the Anabaptists even imagined that Church and State might be separated. Luther and the English gave the primacy to the State, while Calvin, insisting on the complete autonomy of the Church, in effect gave the primacy to it. Equally in both cases, however, the new religion became the religion of the State, and all persons under the jurisdiction of the one were at the same time and by the same token under the jurisdiction of the other. Thus Calvin—and others elsewhere, following him—minutely regulated, for the purposes of religious discipline and instruction, the daily life of every citizen of Geneva, enforcing the rules with the help of the civil government, and tolerating no dissent as well as no disobedience.

The chief difference here between Calvinism and Catholicism

is that the Protestant attempt at regulation was successful only for brief periods of exceptional enthusiasm, and then only within relatively small areas. The reason for Protestant failure, in this direction, is that Protestants, in their confidence that they alone were in possession of the absolute truth, fancied the Reformation was to bear fruit in an instantly transformed human nature. Every Protestant was to be a saint; but experience soon showed that saints could not be made by legislation. The Protestant conception of sainthood, moreover, tended to be negative and gloomy; and the historian Macaulay was not far wrong when he declared that the English puritans of the mid-seventeenth century prohibited bear baiting, not because that barbarous sport was cruel to the bears, but only because it gave pleasure to the spectators. In general, then, sanguine expectations made for oppressive regulation, which made for reaction, which afforded a field for fresh reforming efforts. Thus Protestantism has followed an uneven course, periodically bursting forth in revivals more or less spectacular, until the "revival" has come to be regarded as characteristic of it—though it is in fact a symptom of disease.

### SOME UNFORESEEN RESULTS OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

#### **Christianity weakened through division**

There is no desire, lying behind what is said here, either to belittle the need which the Reformation attempted to satisfy or to imply that the Protestant revolt did not have far-reaching consequences of the utmost importance. That the Roman Catholic Church, while remaining a many-sided institution, had nevertheless become a corrupt instrument of merciless oppression throughout Europe, has been recognized above. It is useless to imagine what reforms might have been accomplished within it, in time, had the opportunity been given. In point of fact, it took nothing less than the Reformation to arouse Catholicism to the necessity of a radical change of spirit—though then the Church proved that it had a remarkable and immense fund of vitality, as it obviously has today. For the

Reformation was immediately followed by the Counter-Reformation, as it is called, or Catholic Reformation, of which the two most conspicuous outward signs are the work of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and the formation of the Society of Jesus by Ignatius de Loyola (1491-1556), which received papal approbation in 1540. The Council of Trent not only defined carefully the points of opposition between Catholicism and Protestantism, but also formulated and affirmed a number of doctrines which had long been held without ever being explicitly defined, and instituted reforms of abuses which affected every sphere of the life of the Church. The work of the Council was effective, because there was at the same time a marked increase of religious seriousness throughout the Church.

This, then, was the earliest of the larger consequences of the Reformation. It was one which the Reformers had not foreseen or desired. In both respects it was typical of others that were to follow; and it is a fact which must be faced that the Reformation derives no small part of its great historical importance from its unforeseen and undesired consequences.

#### **Tolerance and religious liberty**

By introducing a permanent division, the Reformation permanently weakened Christianity and rendered it much more vulnerable to the enemies of religion, who were shortly to increase at a rapid rate. The heated theological controversy, in the second place, which attended the Reformation; as well as the fact of division itself, led Protestants and Catholics alike to define their positions more exactly and fully and rigidly than had previously been thought necessary by the Church. Thus Christianity thenceforth presented the spectacle of a number of rival bodies, each claiming to be the sole custodian of saving truth, and each hardened into a spiritual tyranny claiming absolute control over the minds, consciences, and activities of its adherents.

This situation made irresistibly for religious toleration, though nothing could have been further from the wishes of those who created it. In addition, the very nature of Protes-





tantism made not only for religious toleration but for the growth of rationalistic naturalism, in spite of all that the earliest Reformers could do. For Protestants, in denying the authority of the Catholic Church, did not at all deny that Christianity had been divinely revealed, but simply claimed that the Bible, the written record of revelation, was the sole and final authority for Christians. The Bible was regarded—equally by both Catholics and Protestants—as the infallible word of God. It was without error and it was complete;—that is, it contained the absolute truth concerning everything with which it dealt, and it contained all that was necessary to be known for salvation.

However, the matter was not so simple as it may at first have seemed. For if one denied the authority of the Church, which hitherto had vouched for the Bible, how could one be sure that the book was really what it purported to be? The revelation it recorded was one made long ago, to men of a distant place and alien language. How could one know that such a record as the Bible contained was authentic? Yet so much depended on its complete authenticity that some way had to be found of proving it. But, supposing that the way was found, difficulties were by no means over. The Bible, unfortunately, was not always clear, and it was not at all evident even to a careful reader of it just what was or was not necessary for salvation. How was this important question to be decided? Hitherto, of course, the Church had been the authoritative interpreter. The unescapable logic of the Protestant position was that henceforth each man must be his own interpreter, and this was understood and accepted without any conception of what the immediate or remoter consequences were to be.

The immediate result was chaos. Nobody wanted that, and nobody had really contemplated every man's setting up his own church, which was the same thing as having no church at all. Hence the Reformers were promptly compelled to draw up articles of faith and statements of doctrine—such as the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterian Church—which prescribed how the Bible must be understood. But to do this, of course, was to give the interpretation thus drawn up an author-

ity superior to that of the Bible, and so in effect to create a new infallible church. It was, in other words, to do exactly that which, when done by the Catholic Church, had caused the Protestants to secede from it.

The expedient was a partial and temporary success, inasmuch as it accomplished what many thought to be necessary, and so were ready to accept. At no time, however, did it prevent Protestants from disagreeing with one another, and it did not long postpone resort to the only argument which, men thought, could serve as a solid justification of Protestantism. This may be illustrated by two passages from William Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation*. Chillingworth asks:

If Scripture cannot be the judge of any controversy, how shall that touching the Church and the notes of it be determined? And if it be the sole judge of this one, why may it not of others? Why not of all? Those only excepted wherein the Scripture itself is the subject of the question, which cannot be determined but by natural reason, the only principle beside Scripture which is common to Christians.

And concerning the interpretation of Scripture Chillingworth says:

Every man is to judge for himself with the judgment of discretion. . . . For if the Scripture (as it is in things necessary) be plain, why should it be more necessary to have a judge to interpret it in plain places, than to have a judge to interpret the meaning of a council's decrees, and others to interpret their interpretations, and others to interpret theirs, and so on for ever? And where they are not plain, there if we, using diligence to find the truth, do yet miss of it and fall into error, there is no danger in it. They that err and they that do not err may both be saved. So that those places which contain things necessary, and wherein error were dangerous, need no infallible interpreter, because they are plain; and those that are obscure need none, because they contain not things necessary, neither is error in them dangerous.

Here Chillingworth not only makes the individual's "natural reason" the final judge as to both the authenticity of Scripture and its meaning, but also points the way to toleration, in his insistence that those questions about Christianity over which there can be controversy are certainly unessential questions.



This leaves room, of course, for any number of differences of interpretation which may be, without harm, allowed to coexist in a community, where all are at least Christians of some kind. And such toleration was established in the colony of Rhode Island about the time that Chillingworth was writing, and in Maryland a couple of years later. It was established in Pennsylvania in 1682, and in England in 1689. It was not at first complete—England, for example, punishing Roman Catholics with severe disabilities until much later—nor has complete religious liberty, the next step, been yet attained in all civilized portions of the earth—nor is it likely to be. In general it may be said that religious toleration, while made inevitable by the many divisions between Protestants, would have come even more slowly than it did, had not political considerations made it seem expedient. And religious liberty, similarly, has won its way not so much on its own merits as because of growing religious indifference.

### RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Religious indifference or, under some circumstances, active hostility to Christianity, has come to be an important phenomenon in the modern world owing chiefly to the growth of the exact sciences and to the progress of historical criticism. The last three centuries can be pictured—and are pictured by some historians—as a prolonged but constantly triumphant warfare of “reason” against “superstition.” And in this picture “superstition” stands for Christianity. One trouble with the war, which has made it so lengthy an affair, is that religion never seems to know when she is beaten. The “rationalists,” as they like to call themselves, are perfectly correct in maintaining that they have a long succession of decisive victories to their credit; and one must agree that if Christianity is, as they tell us, nothing more than a hotbed of “superstition,” it is strange indeed that it still survives and still opposes itself resolutely to these benefactors of mankind. In order to understand the situation for ourselves, however, we must proceed to see just what “rationalism” has accomplished.

**Religion versus rationalism**

The "natural reason" which Chillingworth and others in the early seventeenth century liberated for the support of Protestantism was supposed to be a faculty implanted in men, by the exercise of which they could come to know the absolute truth, in so far as that was mirrored in the structure of the universe. This was a conception of reason which had been taken over from ancient Greek philosophy by medieval Catholicism, and which had descended through St. Thomas Aquinas and others to the fathers of the Anglican Church. It had been maintained by Christian philosophers of western Europe, under varying conditions and with apparent success, from St. Augustine until the seventeenth century, that man, simply by the use of "natural reason," could learn all that was necessary for salvation—and, indeed, as was pointed out in the preceding chapter, this position had been taken by St. Paul in the earliest years of Christianity. It had also been maintained, by St. Thomas and others, that the revealed portion of Christianity, though not, of course, discoverable by reason, was agreeable to reason, and formed a harmonious and necessary complement to that which reason could discover.

During the period of the Renaissance, however, there had been in some quarters a growing doubt about the reasonableness of Christianity; because increasing knowledge both of ancient, pre-Christian civilization and thought, and of the Far East and the Americas, kept suggesting that Christian philosophy had ignored much that must be taken into account in any complete and true picture of the universe and its relation to its real or alleged Creator. And these suggestions that the conclusions of reason might not after all be in complete agreement with Christianity had begun to gather force at a time when the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism had happened, on the one hand, to place extreme emphasis upon the supposed infallibility of the Bible, and, on the other, to call in question the authority which vouched for the Bible. Moreover, from the time of Copernicus (1473-1543) on, to the present day, both the physical and natural sciences and histori-

cal investigation have continued to pile up evidence that Christianity, in the form in which it was universally conceived in the sixteenth century, is hopelessly at variance with demonstrable truth. This evidence long ago attained massive proportions, and entire conclusiveness.

It is sometimes said that the quarrel between those former friends, reason and Christianity, reached its climax and finally irreconcilable stage with Darwin's announcement of his theory of organic evolution in 1859. And in a sense this is true; but it should be realized that, in essentials, the issue was clearly drawn and understood before the close of the seventeenth century. It took, indeed, only one consideration to place the question fairly before men—and a consideration which historical study and geographical exploration had forced upon their attention with unescapable emphasis by the end of the sixteenth century. For it was by that time evident beyond doubt that untold numbers of men in many parts of the world had lived and died without the possibility of becoming even acquainted with the Christian revelation. It was evident, indeed, that only a minority of the men born since the time of Christ had had the opportunity to become Christians. God, then, stood convicted of incredible favoritism and ferocity if it was really true that historical Christianity afforded the one and only means of salvation. Christians had, to be sure, ways of meeting this issue; but as time passed it seemed more and more clear to reasonable men that the difficulty was being evaded rather than conquered—that, in fact, Christians were trying not at all successfully to make the best of a bad situation. Hence it seemed fair to conclude that the claims made for Christianity were exaggerated, if not wholly false.

And men did so conclude. An English nobleman who was in a position to know, wrote, in the early years of the eighteenth century:

The fable of Christianity, as Leo X called it, was now so exploded in England that any man of fashion or condition would have been almost as much ashamed in company to own himself a Christian as formerly he would have been afraid to profess himself none. Even the women who prided themselves at all on their understanding took care to let



people know that Christian prejudices were what they despised being bound by. Many of the best writers of the age had indeed written so forcibly and so openly against this system of religion that it was not surprising they gained so many converts.<sup>1</sup>

### How far has rationalism overthrown religion?

It is impossible here even to outline the history of this conflict. All that we can now do is to notice just what it is that the progress of knowledge since the Renaissance has overthrown. It has completely overthrown the notion that the Bible is at all different in its composition from any other literary and historical document. It has established beyond question that the Bible, to be understood, must be studied just as we study every other ancient record, and must be judged just as we judge every other ancient record. It has established beyond question that the Bible is the work of men like ourselves, subject to error as we are; and that it necessarily was written in terms of the "science and philosophy" of its day. When the Bible tells us that the world was created in seven days, we are sure that the Bible is wrong—as we are also sure it is wrong when it tells us that Joshua caused the sun to stand still. How much this leaves intact is today a difficult and unsettled question.

It should be clear, however, that the successful attacks of "rationalism" upon the doctrine of Biblical infallibility do nothing to overthrow Christianity. These attacks overthrow only that conception of the historical record, embodied in the Bible, which had come to prevail in the Middle Ages and which was specially developed and "hardened" in the sixteenth century. It is also a fact, however, that the progress of knowledge has rendered completely untenable the notion that Christianity can claim to be the one "true" or necessarily final religion of mankind, and has shown that the Pauline account of the relation between God and his creatures must be regarded as having only symbolic value.

It is supposed by very many at the present time that the progress of knowledge has demonstrated a great deal more

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<sup>1</sup>Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*.

than this;—that it has, for example, proved men to be only quite superior animals; that it has disproved the possibility of a future life, and of a Creator, and of the divine nature of Jesus; that it has, consequently, confined the sphere of man's aspiration rigidly to this earth; and the like. All suppositions of this kind, however, are based upon ignorance. Science cannot tell us anything at all except within its own field, and most people do not understand clearly what it can tell us even within its limited sphere of competence. We all have an irresistible craving for complete certainty, about life, about conduct, about man's destiny. One of the early sentences in Mohammed's *Koran* declares, "This is the book in which there is nothing uncertain." Millions of human beings have been ready to accept this claim, because of their *need* for certainty, because of their need for a rock-like basis of sure knowledge upon which they could rely in the conduct of their lives. Today, dazzled by the extraordinary progress of scientific discovery and by the applications of science which minister to our comfort and convenience, men are tempted to rely on science as a guide, just as in former times they relied upon the wisdom or self-assurance of religious teachers or prophets. But in point of fact science is strictly limited to the field of direct human observation, to the things we can know from direct impressions made on us through one or more of our five senses; whereas all of the great questions mentioned above lie outside of this field. The question, for instance, whether or not there is a Creator is a philosophic question, not a scientific question. Philosophy does attempt something which science cannot: it does attempt to construct a picture, as it were, of the entire universe, proceeding from the seen to the unseen and unexperienced, and combining all into an harmonious whole. In this, philosophy verges upon religion, because it really gives us what, when we encounter the same thing in simple and concrete form amongst peoples in an early stage of development, we call *myths*. A myth is simply a "likely story" told to explain how something happened, as was said in the first of these chapters, "once upon a time." And though this or that myth may with later increase of knowledge be set down as false, the kind of question which

myth tries to answer can never be disposed of by merely human means. In other words, ultimate questions concerning the universe as a whole and man's destiny can never be finally settled. No one can ever finally prove or disprove the existence of a Creator, or settle the question whether or not the souls of men are immortal, and so on. We can only have likely opinions about all these matters, including the great question as to the true nature of Jesus—likely opinions or *faith* that one answer rather than another must be true.

Faith, of course, should not be blind; should be as far as possible justified by evidence and reason. And this is why for several generations men have been turning hopefully to science, and then, upon learning that science has nothing to say about ultimate questions, have even tried to dismiss such questions as "unreal." It is indeed the last and hardest lesson men have to learn as they climb upward from barbarism and ignorance, that we live surrounded by mystery, through which our eyes cannot see except darkly. We cannot live at all without *some* answer to the great ultimate questions, yet no answer can be based upon absolute certitude. More than this, the knowledge, or certainty, we crave cannot be achieved even within the little field of our own direct observation, as the progress of science itself shows. Nothing in our world has changed so rapidly in recent years as our so-called science. There is no reason to imagine that it will not change and change again in the future as in the past. And this means that however practically useful science may be, it does not go far enough beneath the surface of life to afford any sure basis for faith.

It is fair to say, then, that in the conflict between "rationalism" and Christianity, the former has been properly and decisively victorious over much which it has attacked; but that, nevertheless, it has left the essence or vital core of religious faith and of Christianity untouched. Discredited science and myths have not been shown to be identical with Christianity. Historic Christianity has, certainly, been shown to be imbedded in a mass of outworn science and philosophy and in a mythology based upon this faulty "knowledge"; and this inevitably, and properly, has had an effect upon present-day Christianity—



but not the effect of destruction. Nothing in the whole range of modern knowledge shows that the Christian reading of life, and Christian faith and hope based thereon, may not still be nearer the truth of things than any alternative answers hitherto given to our deepest questionings. Nothing in the whole range of modern knowledge invalidates Christian faith that Jesus was in a unique sense the Son of God and, indeed, just what he was said to be at the Council of Chalcedon. What modern knowledge of several kinds does show, nevertheless, is vitally important; for it does show that Christianity is at present in desperate need of reconstruction. And, to speak more generally, it shows that religious truth, if it is to be kept alive in our world of change, must always be open to critical examination and must periodically be reformulated and reinterpreted. The task is difficult and hazardous. It is not surprising that its necessity has been recognized slowly and with reluctance. Reconstruction is, however, bound to come; and we are in fact today in the midst of it.

### THE PRESENT SITUATION

Very many would disagree with the statement that a radical reconstruction of Christianity is bound to come, some thinking all religion out of place in the modern world and hoping for its early disappearance; others thinking that no reconstruction of Christianity is necessary or desirable; and still others contending that reconstruction has been actually in progress for many years and is now practically accomplished. Our present situation, in different words, is one of extreme confusion. It is generally recognized that, if Christianity is to be discarded, a substitute—not necessarily a new religion, in the sense in which the word has been used in these chapters—must be found for it; because social existence is not conceivable except in terms of *some* commonly accepted evaluation of life from which standards of conduct may be derived. There have been, however, during the last hundred years, some who would not assent even to this proposition. These are out-and-out anarchists. They should not, perhaps, be taken seriously. Yet they call atten-

tion to two serious enough facts: the fact that some members of modern society have been torn loose from all traditional moorings, and are ready to entertain *any* proposal of change; and also the fact that some members of modern society are so uncompromisingly rebellious that they would destroy every existing social institution, in the belief that all are completely outworn.

### Militant Atheism

The important representatives today of the view that all religion is pernicious are the Marxian Communists who rule Russia, and who have adherents or followers spread over a considerable portion of the earth. They regard organized Christianity as a tool of the capitalist, or exploiting, class. They point out that even where Christian churches are not expressly allied with this class against the proletariat and oppressed wage-earners generally, still, the traditional Christian message acts as an anodyne, persuading the poor to remain content with their lot and to accept patiently all manner of injustice, while they look to a future life beyond the grave for their reward. The Communists themselves, moreover, are materialists, with no belief in a future life, holding unqualifiedly that the "goodness" or "fullness of life" to which men can attain is confined to present earthly comforts and enjoyments. Hence they regard the one object worth striving for as being the attainment of a just social order, which includes the maximum production of consumable goods. What they mean by "just" is sufficiently indicated in their famous saying, "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs." This of course makes a strong appeal to the individual conscious of unfulfilled needs; but an essential part of Communist doctrine is that the good of the whole society, regarded collectively as a kind of indissoluble unit, is the goal, to be achieved at whatever sacrifice to the individual.

The Communists are correct in regarding their doctrine as fundamentally incompatible, not only with historic Christianity, but with all of the higher religions of humanity; and they have acted logically in moving for the "liquidation" of all religion,

by direct persecution where they have power, and by unceasing propaganda elsewhere. In effect, however, the militant anti-religious attitude of the Communists is the substitution, or attempted substitution, of a new faith for an old one, because the philosophy behind Communism can no more be proved or disproved than the philosophy behind Christianity or any other of the higher religions. And many observers in recent years have pointed out the startling similarity between Communism in action and all the manifestations of fanatical religious faith afforded by the history of Christianity or the history of Mohammedanism. Communism, for example, sets itself up as containing the whole sum of truth and as affording infallible rules of conduct, and exhibits all the intolerance which has always accompanied unbridled fanaticism. It has its own version of the Kingdom of God—the classless society of the indefinite future. It has its Messiah, appropriately enough a collective Messiah, the Proletariat. It has too its prophets, apostles, saints, and martyrs; and its bible, of which it may be said that the “Old Testament” is comprised in Karl Marx’s *Capital* and the “New Testament” in the writings of Lenin. There is also a Communist hierarchy, as truly as there is a Catholic hierarchy, with the difference that at present the former is organized more strictly and effectively on the principles of absolutism. And finally Communism has, like other religions, its heretics and its missionaries—the latter sent out everywhere because Communism, like other religions, aspires to world-dominion.

### **Christian Socialism**

The fundamental appeal of Communism is to humanitarian sympathy. But the Communists have not been the only, or the first, members of modern society to hear the rising demand for social justice. Christianity has always been a religion of brotherly love, and even before the beginning of the nineteenth century many Christians had become aware that changed social conditions unmistakably called for a new and different expression of the spirit of brotherly love, in active efforts to change the social order itself. It was natural, indeed inevitable,



that through many centuries of the Christian era brotherly love should manifest itself only in such fashion as it could *along with*, on the whole, passive acceptance of existing social, political, and economic conditions, whatever these might be. This was inevitable, not only because Christians took a disillusioned or pessimistic view of what man in his secular earthly activities was capable of, and not only because they regarded this present life as a brief period of pilgrimage through a bad place, but also because through many centuries they expected the imminent coming of the Kingdom of God, with the complete destruction of the whole earthly order of things. During the nineteenth century a number of different influences united to alter profoundly this traditional outlook. The modern age has been specially, and increasingly, characterized by the *rapidity* with which far-reaching social changes have occurred. This has tended more and more to make men think of the social structure as not being something inevitable and in the nature of things, but as being artificial, man-made, and therefore capable of being remade, and improved. Along with this there was in the latter half of the eighteenth century a growth of tender-heartedness, or social sympathy, exemplified in the work of John Howard, the English prison reformer, who died in 1790, and a little later in the work of William Wilberforce (1759-1833), who led the movement against the English slave trade, resulting in its abolition in 1807. These were distinctively Christian efforts, motivated by the Christian conviction of the sacredness of the individual personality. And the same Christian sympathy was aroused to the point of indignant and effective action in the first half of the nineteenth century by the inhuman oppression of industrial workers in England, where mass-production of cheap factory-made goods first developed.

Out of it, moreover, there arose within the Church of England in the 1840's a definite concerted movement known then and since as Christian Socialism. Its first leaders were two clergymen, F. D. Maurice (1805-1872) and Charles Kingsley (1819-1875). It had for its object the promotion of political, social, and economic reform designed to lessen

if not remove the sufferings and privations of the poor, to curb the growth of irresponsible wealth, to open the doors of earthly opportunity through education to all, and, generally, to equalize the conditions of earthly life for all men. This movement has continued and spread, until today practically all Christian groups everywhere are keenly animated in a great part of their work by humanitarian sympathy.

There can be no doubt that this marked change in outlook and emphasis within organized Christianity was sustained and reinforced in the latter half of the nineteenth century by certain of the natural sciences, particularly geology and biology, and by that study of prehistoric man which goes by the name of anthropology. Through these studies it was made clear that the earth, and man on the earth, had existed far longer than had hitherto been supposed; and, what is more, equally clear that the human race has before it an almost unimaginable stretch of time during which this earth will remain habitable. Henceforth, however it might be with the transient individual, humanity could not think of itself as at all likely to be transplanted in any near future to an unearthly Kingdom of God. The human race, it was clear, might as well settle down to face present earthly facts as an indefinitely continuing problem, and proceed energetically to make the best of present earthly life, or in other words, to promote "the greatest happiness of the greatest number."

### Religious Modernism

It could not be expected that this significant, indeed revolutionary, shift from the uncompromising *otherworldliness* of earlier Christianity, once it had begun, could be stopped where its first leaders would have wished it to stop. It is the almost universal rule with popular movements that they soon get beyond control, and pursue a course of their own. And so it has been with Christian Socialism. As taken up and carried further by various religious bodies particularly in the United States, such as Unitarianism, Universalism, and Liberal Congregationalism, a viewpoint and aim has been developed which is almost completely divorced from historic Christianity,

in being thoroughly secular and *this-worldly*. There are, of course, considerable differences of emphasis, not only between various groups, but between individuals within the same group or sect, so that it is impossible to make any general statement without qualification. Nevertheless, an unmistakable tendency can be discerned towards a position which may briefly be summarized as follows:

"Man as religious," is "simply man behaving in a certain social way." Religions themselves "are in constant process of change in dependence upon the changes in social situation, the advance of practical technique, and the enlarged understanding of the world." There is a constant and distinguishing factor in all religions, none the less: Religion is always a "shared quest for completely satisfying life." What is considered satisfactory varies with different periods and peoples, but invariably consists of "practical or ideal satisfactions of the socially approved needs and aspirations of human life." Nowadays we may find inspiration in the Bible, in so far as it is a record of the honest and earnest efforts of the ancient Hebrews not only to express their "socially approved needs and aspirations," but to satisfy them practically by such means as they could devise. Similarly, "we are coming to the place where Christians will learn about Jesus, not to make him a formal authority, but rather to gain inspiration for the creative task of constructing theological doctrines which shall be as honest and as worthy for our day as were the teachings of Jesus for his day." "The only Christianity which we know is a historical movement in which fallible human beings, meeting definite geographical, political, and cultural conditions, think out the best program possible under the circumstances. As conditions change, the activities, organizations, and doctrines of Christians change." The teachings of Jesus were suited to people very different from ourselves, living in circumstances very different from ours; our task as loyal Christians is to express the stimulus derived from Jesus "in the attempt to think creatively in terms of modern life." This we must do entirely in the spirit of the fearless modern scientist, without any regard for authority or tradition. Former



generations of Christians, because of the conditions under which they lived, regarded "man's life on this earth . . . as a 'probation' to fit him for eternal life in an 'other' world." "During the past two or three generations, however, our attitude toward this present world has significantly changed. To an increasing extent we are coming to feel very much at home here. Particularly within the past fifty years the rapid progress of scientific control and the multiplication of surprising inventions have made our world a supremely interesting place." Hence the modern man's Christianity must be "an attempt . . . to enter into right relations with those forces which will enable him to realize the richest life in this world here and now."<sup>1</sup>

We may compare with this conclusion some sentences from what is described as "the authoritative summary of the essential principles" of the latest development amongst the Unitarians, their so-called Humanism:

Humanism believes that the chief end of man is not to glorify God and enjoy him for ever, but rather to glorify human life and enjoy it as long as it lasts. . . . If there be a God, man cannot know who or what he is, or how to glorify him. He has no actual knowledge of anything above or beyond himself. . . . Man is not to be treated as a means to a world order, either economic, political, or social. These things are means to the ends of human life, human life is not a means to their ends. And in this principle lies Humanism's attitude toward the whole social system. Every institution—the state, the church, the school, the corporation, the labor union; and every social process—marriage, suffrage, immigration, prohibition, banking—stand or fall according to their contribution to human life. . . . Human life is the thing of supreme worth in the world, and must be treated as the end of all human endeavor. . . . Humanism is the effort to understand human experience by means of human inquiry. . . . Intelligent people today do not take seriously the claims of supernatural revelation. They know that all the knowledge acquired by the race so far has been the result of human inquiry, and so Humanism substitutes human inquiry for divine revelation as the means of finding truth and understanding human experience. . . . Humanism depends entirely upon inquiry for its body of knowledge; and while the

<sup>1</sup>The quoted passages in this paragraph are taken from chapters by A. Eustace Haydon and Gerald Birney Smith in *Religious Thought in the Last Quarter-Century*, edited by Gerald Birney Smith, and from *Current Christian Thinking*, by Gerald Birney Smith. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press, publishers.

body of knowledge is very incomplete it is gradually and constantly growing. And of late years it has increased by leaps and bounds. This humanistic method has added more to the sum total of knowledge in the last century than the old method added in a hundred centuries. And the future promises still more rapid strides. The gates to the realm of knowledge have just recently been opened by the scientific method, and we are about to enter. It is only within the last few years that we have gained any real knowledge about ourselves and the world in which we live. And as this knowledge increases and becomes potent in the lives of the many, it will sweep the race along to higher and higher levels. . . . [In spite of his recognition that there are limits, both within and without man, which are apparently insuperable] the Humanist has a vision of what life might be upon this planet if all our intelligence were brought to bear upon its improvement, and he has faith that this vision may be realized through the responsibility and efforts of men themselves. . . . Humanism looks straight into the face of the world and of human life, sees its good and its bad, and expecting no help from without, determines to make the world a fit place in which to live and human life worth living. In some of its aspects Humanism may not be so comforting as the older forms of religion have been; but it will develop men and not mollicoddles. . . . It is time that we saw things as they really are. . . . In spite of an indifferent universe, we ourselves must keep alive all the good the past hath had, and add to it such good as we can create. . . . The world needs many things today, but above all it needs Humanism, which guarantees a fearless outlook and a free intelligence. The virtues corresponding to the points which I have made are knowledge, kindness, courage, and service. . . . With these tools, we can build a beautiful home for mankind on this temporary earth.<sup>1</sup>

### **Fundamentalism, the reaction against Modernism**

The basic contrasts between Marxian Communism and Christianity, which make the two faiths irreconcilable with each other, are to be found in the materialism, this-worldliness, and collectivism of the former. Historic Christianity, as should be clear from the sketch given in these chapters, is completely opposed to all three of these Communist articles of belief. Obviously, moreover, the religious Modernism of which an account has just been given tends towards the

<sup>1</sup>Printed in *The Twilight of Christianity*, by Harry Elmer Barnes, who states that this "authoritative summary" comes from a sermon preached in 1927 by Dr. John H. Dietrich. Professor Barnes's book is dedicated to Dr. Dietrich as the "foremost American exponent of a civilized religion." In quoting, the present writer has altered the position of the first sentence given above. Reprinted by permission of Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, Inc., publishers.

Communist position. And for this reason the leaders of Modernism have been regarded as not much better than traitors by those to whom historic Christianity is still something real. In the eighteenth century the ancestors of our "modernists" provoked the Wesleyan revival and allied movements of return to "Bible Christianity." In the nineteenth century they provoked the Oxford Movement and a widespread return to Catholicism. And in recent years in the United States our "modernists" have provoked the Fundamentalist Movement. In each case these movements have been indicative of a conviction that the "forward-looking" thinkers had lost sight of that which was distinctive and essential in Christianity—and, by the same token, of something so important and still so vital in the lives of men that it was worth preserving at any cost.

Some intellectual leaders have thought Fundamentalism so ridiculous that they have not tried, apparently, to understand it. Ridiculous it may be—because such an extreme and indefensible attitude as, for example, the militant atheism of today nearly always ends by provoking its opposite extreme—but, for all that, it is important. It may be defined as an attempt to preserve the spirit and truth of historic Christianity in the traditional Protestant fashion—by requiring of its followers an implicit belief in the literal truth of every statement in the Bible. Hence it seems benighted to many educated people because it is an effort to preserve the spirit of the Bible by preserving the letter, in the face of all evidence now available, from science and from historical research, which proves conclusively, as we have already noted, that many statements in the Bible cannot be literally true, and that others cannot be true in any sense. In this respect, Fundamentalism takes a course which may be considered unnecessary as well as unintelligent; nevertheless, it shows, as does the renewed growth of the Roman Catholic Church during the last hundred years, that the spirit of historic Christianity is a living force, which brings to a very large body of men and women in Europe and America a peace so real under the trial of experience from day to day that we cannot suppose it to be



grounded in mere delusion. It brings to these people, evidently, a great *deliverance*—deliverance from the agonizing illusion that man is the master of life and of the earth, and able to order his existence to suit himself; deliverance from the fevers and brutality of days spent in pursuing earthly ease and enjoyment; deliverance from the sheer emptiness of a gospel, like Communism, which definitely closes the good life to us, while promising that our children's children's children may some day enjoy it—for a brief moment. Certainly it brings much else; but, today as in the beginning, historic Christianity is still a living religion because, over and behind its disillusioned, profound reading of life, there stands the Son of God and Man, saying, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden . . .

As we have duly noticed above, it is no longer possible for us to accept the absolute and exclusive claims of Christianity. It is not the only true religion; it may not be the final religion of the race. God has manifested Himself in divers ways to divers men, and what will be we do not know. But historic Christianity has successfully held its own in the world under many severe trials and through many profound changes, and remains today unique not only in its Founder but in its fruits. It is very evident, moreover, that it is not dying, and is not going to die. Its enemies still find that they only strengthen it by their attacks. It stands on a solid foundation, on truth which is verified over and over again in history and in daily experience. It is, we may fairly believe, bound to pass through its present time of trial, and triumphantly to receive the re-statement and reinterpretation which it imperatively needs. In firmly opposing themselves to much of the assured knowledge and mature scholarship of our time, the Fundamentalists and the Roman Catholic Church alike seem tragically wrong-headed to many educated people. Yet we should remember that reconstruction is not easy and cannot be rapid. The record of the bold and confident innovators from the seventeenth century to our day is one to strike caution into the hearts of responsible men. Again and again these gentlemen have anxiously retained the name of Christianity, while throwing

away the reality in favor of some "time-spirit" or demand of the moment which turned out presently to be only an empty phantom.

### Looking towards the future

What is wanted, and what is preparing, though we have it not yet save in hints and fragments, is a thorough reconstitution of Christianity, relieving it of its present burden of outworn and discredited physical knowledge, making clear what in it is symbolic or mythological, making clear also the reasons for the presence of symbol and myth in religion, but preserving inviolable the historic place of its Founder, his whole mission and message to humanity, explaining both mission and message plainly, and likewise the philosophy they imply, and, finally, setting forth in unmistakable terms the meaning and promise of the Christian way of life as contrasted with the other ways of life open to modern man. What we are perpetually getting is some new attempt to adapt Christianity to our own demands or passing needs, often by a process of picking and choosing from the New Testament that which seems to be in harmony with the secular structure of contemporary life. What we should be getting is the attempt to shed light on the real nature and value of our demands and notions by confronting them with the Christian evaluation of life, stated in terms that we of today can fully understand. There is every reason to expect that precisely this is what we shall get, increasingly, in the future; and meanwhile, despite all contemporary hostilities to religion, despite all signs of sheer religious indifference, and despite the internal divisions amongst Christians, we shall be wise if we are not tempted to fancy that historic Christianity has had its day.

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## MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION<sup>1</sup>

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**T**HERE IS no other type of associated life that touches the individual quite so closely as do domestic institutions—marriage and the family. Most persons are born or adopted into a family and are reared within it; their lives are more completely and intimately bound up within its activities and traditions than with those of any other institution; its influences are stamped so indelibly upon their personality and character that they never get away from them completely as long as they live; and when they mature they usually marry and establish a family of their own. Throughout most of his life each person participates intimately in domestic institutions. So far as we know there never was a society in all the past that did not develop some form of domestic organization, and there is no contemporary society that has not inherited most of its domestic practices from those of the past. But before we turn to the interesting study of their descent through history we should take a glance at the general character and functions of domestic institutions.

The most important domestic institutions are marriage and the family. Frequently they are not distinguished in popular usage, probably because they are so closely bound together in

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<sup>1</sup>The author acknowledges his indebtedness to Willystine Goodsell, whose work, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, revised edition, 1934), was an important source in the preparation of this chapter.

everyday life that they seem to be a single indivisible unit. It is quite possible, however, for a marriage union to be formed that does not result in a family, and it is likewise possible for at least a partial family to exist without the relation of marriage. The family is a parent-child relationship; marriage, a relationship of husband-wife—that is, a sanctioned union of persons of opposite sexes, recognized by the group as the husband-wife relationship. Marriage as a social institution is not to be confused with the marriage ceremony or wedding, which is simply the social gesture by which the group places its approval upon the relationships between husband and wife. The ceremony has something of the same function as the granting of a charter to a corporation by governmental authority; it signifies the public sanction of a new social group.

### **The origin and functions of domestic institutions**

How did marriage and the family originate? As in the case of all other basic institutions, we have no records on which to base an answer. In an earlier chapter a plausible theory is presented.<sup>1</sup> It is pointed out there that a scientific study of animal life discloses the interesting fact that as species advance in the course of their evolution from simpler biological forms to more complex forms, the degree of helplessness of the young at birth increases and the period of immaturity lengthens. In the case of human offspring the state of helplessness is greatest and the period of immaturity longest of all animals. In the case of man, therefore, the need of long parental care to ensure the survival of the young is most insistent. The theory is that domestic institutions emerged as the forms of social organization best fitted to perform this necessary function.

Whether or not this theory is correct, it is quite evident that marriage and the family do meet one of the most fundamental needs of society, that of providing the physical care needed by immature offspring and thus preserving the human species. The production of offspring through mating is not a function of the family, but a function of marriage—if of

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 424; 427 f.

any domestic group whatsoever. But once offspring have been brought into existence it is within the social unit, the family, that they are ordinarily afforded care. This has been a basic, universal function of the family, among both men and animals, regardless of time, place, and level of culture. Slight exceptions must be made for those rare instances where older children are given communal care by a larger group than the family.

Just as basic and universal as the function of providing physical care is the family function of socialization, that is, of socializing the child; for it is through this process that the child is inducted into the culture in which he participates and is adjusted to the numerous demands that society lays upon him to conform to customary and traditional ways of social behavior.

As we shall notice later, the history of domestic institutions in Western civilization reveals that many other services, less fundamental than those mentioned above, have been performed by the family: families have frequently assumed some sort of religious function; the organization of the home has served as the unit for economic production; education has usually been a function of the family—this was especially the case before the development of modern public educational systems. To these may be added three other services of social importance: (1) descent, the transmission from generation to generation of membership or status in social groups; (2) succession, the transmission of hereditary titles and ranks; (3) inheritance, the transmission of property.<sup>1</sup> Of the three, inheritance is the most widely diffused, but no one of them is a universal or necessary characteristic of family organization. The list of historical functions of the family could be extended considerably.<sup>2</sup>

Within the domestic field the institution of marriage has served a number of social purposes. It has served as a device

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<sup>1</sup>Suggested by Rivers.

<sup>2</sup>For a detailed treatment of the subject consult W. Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family*. Most of the diverse activities described by Goodsell are, however, incidental rather than basic functions of family life.



by which society has sought to regularize and control sex relations. This need appears to have been universal, for all cultures have devised checks for the preservation of their own standards of sex morality. Marriage has also served to give greater permanence and stability to the family and has thus provided more effective coöperation between man and woman in caring for immature children. In the whole history of domestic institutions the economic function of marriage has been so obvious that many students have declared that it is essentially an economic phenomenon, having arisen either out of the exploitation of the female by the male, or out of the desire to protect and transmit private property. Marriage is ordinarily an economic asset either to the man or to the woman or to both. Among many preliterate peoples, the wife becomes a servant or laborer for her husband. Conditions of life in most agricultural societies place a premium upon the services of the wife and make marriage a most attractive arrangement for the male. On the other hand, many civilizations recognize the wife's right to economic support by her husband and a large proportion of the women of today still find their greatest economic security in marriage.

#### **Group customs limiting matrimony**

In every culture certain taboos, sentiments, or traditions concerning the institution of marriage have arisen to place limitations upon the right to enter into the matrimonial state. The most important and universal of these limitations is the prohibition of marriages between persons within certain degrees of kinship. There are wide variations of the limits of such restrictions. All peoples unite in prohibiting the marriage of parent and child. A few permit the marriage of brother and sister, the most important instances being found among peoples who consider royal blood of such importance that only a close relative is fit to marry the ruler. Most peoples prohibit the marriage of an uncle to his niece or an aunt to her nephew. Others set the limits of eligibility at increasingly distant degrees of relationship, until, at the extreme, all persons of any relationship whatsoever are forbidden to marry. At one period

of its history the Christian Church held that the marriage of a man and woman made them one flesh. This conception led to the conclusion that relatives of a husband and wife were biologically related; consequently, they were forbidden to marry. Going further still, the Church included the idea of spiritual relationship as a bar to marriage. The Emperor Justinian forbade the marriage of a man and woman who had stood as godparents to the same child. So involved did the problem of possible relationship of prospective mates become that Charlemagne, in the year 802, ruled that no person could marry until the church officials had made a careful study of possible relationships.

Prohibitions of marriage based on barriers of race, nationality, and religion have been frequently set up. In the fourth century the Church Fathers decreed that marriage between a Christian and a Jew was a capital crime. This prohibition was later extended to include heretics and unbaptized persons. At present several of the states in the American union prohibit marriage between Negroes and whites. The trend of modern legislation in America is to prohibit the marriage only of those who are not physically or mentally good potential parents. These restrictions apply principally to individuals who exhibit the undesirable defects rather than to religious, racial, or national groups as a whole.

A survey of the cultures of the world would impress us with the wide variations in the forms of domestic institutions and in domestic practices. For our use it will not be necessary to go into these complicated patterns of domestic life. As we pass on now to survey the development of domestic life from ancient to contemporary times we shall find abundant evidence of numerous contrasts—and of similarities also—among the domestic institutions and usages of Western societies.

### **MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY IN ANCIENT HEBREW CULTURE**

One important line of descent in the development of modern domestic institutions has its starting point in the early Hebrew culture. This influence has been partly indirect, through

Christianity, which is rooted deep in Judaism; and partly direct, through the transmission of the old Hebrew culture to the modern Jew who is an important component of our population. Because Jewish domestic institutions have undergone important changes within the period of their written history, statements concerning them are necessarily true only within a limited period of time.

### **The Hebrew family**

The earliest records of the Hebrews do not give an adequate picture of their cultural predecessors nor do we know enough about their history to enable us to determine the sources of their domestic forms. The first picture we can glimpse shows them living in isolated household groups under the somewhat rigid control of the father or "patriarch." The household consisted of (1) a relatively small group of biologically related males and unmarried females who traced their descent through the father, (2) wives of the married males, and (3) the servants. The infrequent strangers who visited the group were classed as temporary members of the household and were subject to the authority of the father.

During their early nomadic wanderings prior to their sojourn in Egypt, the Hebrews had acquired a strong tribal organization referred to in the Biblical narrative as the Twelve Tribes of Israel. After the conquest of Canaan, the apportionment of the land among the tribes, the establishment of an agricultural existence, and the subsequent increase of population, tribal feeling gradually became weaker. Small neighborhood groups, consisting of several households united by blood kinship or by process of adoption, came to be a more important social unit than the tribe itself, although tribal membership and traditions were preserved. These neighborhood units were probably the "families" or "houses" which are so frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. The small family consisting of parents and children, and sometimes the household including grandparents, existed within these "houses" and assumed a more important institutional role as the Hebrews developed a more urbanized civilization.



Throughout the period of its known history the Hebrew family has been patriarchal and patrilineal. The powers of the father—which originally included the right to kill his children—were continually redefined until they came to comprise the elaborate code contained in the Talmud. The Hebrew woman was under male control throughout most of her life—of her father or older brother prior to marriage, and of her husband or father-in-law after marriage. The only free honorable woman was the widowed mother who lived with her son. The wife had, however, an honored and respected position in the home. She performed valuable functions—the production of legitimate offspring, the discharge of household tasks, and the education of children. Although respected by the husband and obeyed by the children, legally she was subject to her husband and enjoyed only a few rigidly restricted social, property, and religious rights.

An important attitude which characterized the Hebrews and exerted a profound influence upon some of their domestic practices was their tendency to consider the group as of more consequence than the individual. This was not formally declared by their great thinkers, but, more significantly, it was assumed as unquestionable by the people themselves. No adequate, logical explanation has been made of this characteristic point of view, which the Hebrews share with many historical peoples of antiquity as well as with contemporary preliterate peoples. Perhaps the religious tradition that the Hebrews were the chosen people of God, and that through them all the nations of the earth should be blessed, was a factor. The development of religious ritual by which the children ministered to the well-being of their departed ancestors in the "life beyond" likewise supported the attitude but is not sufficient to explain it.

#### **The Hebrew conception of marriage and divorce**

The desire for the continuance of the tribe, house, or family was highly developed among the Hebrews. This desire could be best realized through the institution of marriage which provided for the production of legitimate offspring.

Because of his basic desire for offspring, the Hebrew husband regarded barrenness as a great misfortune. The man who married a barren woman was allowed by custom either to divorce her and marry another, or to produce children by a second wife or a concubine. The widespread practice of polygyny among the Hebrews can be attributed, in large part, to this desire for offspring. Of course, such exaggerated polygyny as was practiced by King Solomon can hardly be explained on this ground; but the practice of the *levirate*, according to which a younger brother married his brother's widow and produced children for him, had its roots in the demand for legitimate offspring. While marriage served primarily as an instrument for making the family secure, at the same time it had great economic importance among the Hebrews, both during the early pastoral period and throughout their later history. The economic services of the wife were conspicuous; she was the overseer of the home and the producer of many useful articles. In turn, the wife received economic support and security through the household group into which she married.

Notwithstanding the importance of marriage as a means of continuing the family group, it was regarded as a private matter which required neither religious nor civil sanction. Priests, it is true, were frequently invited to participate in both the betrothal and nuptial ceremonies, but their presence was a matter of courtesy only, and was not necessary to make the union valid. Although marriage was private, it was not individual; it was a concern of the large family group, consummated primarily to perpetuate the biological line, rather than to enrich the lives of the individual husbands and wives.

Divorce was likewise a private matter, not granted by either church or state, but depending upon the private domestic group. Like marriage, it was also a concern of the family group; but it depended more completely upon the desire of the individual, the male having a wide range of freedom in the matter. Woman, who was subject to man, had practically no rights of divorce, and could secure one only with the greatest difficulty. The man, on the other hand, might

divorce his wife at any time he chose. If, however, he violated the *mores* and divorced her for any trivial reason, he was subject to the censure of the group. Because of this control by group *mores* few men exercised the right of divorce.

Summarizing the historical importance of the Hebrew family—that is, the Hebrew influences which have come to us directly or indirectly—we note (1) the emphasis upon the patriarchal organization of the family; (2) the subordinate yet highly respected position of woman; (3) the conception of woman's natural place in the home, and (4) the subordination of children and the demand that they respect and obey their parents.

### DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS AMONG THE ANCIENT GREEKS

Although Greek culture profoundly influenced the Western world, especially through its philosophers and artists, Greek domestic institutions did not play an important role in molding our modern domestic life.

#### Characteristic features

The ancient Greeks, like the Hebrews, exhibit a patriarchal family from the beginning of the historical period. Their dependence upon still earlier, preliterate forms of organization is indicated by the fact that the Athenians at the time of Solon were divided into four tribes. The tribe was divided into three religious units, called *phratries*, each of which was in turn divided into thirty *gentes*, or great families. Descent was patrilineal; but kinship was based primarily upon common worship of the family gods and submission to the authority of the father rather than upon blood ties.

Among the Athenians, woman was conspicuously subordinated. She had practically no legal powers and was severely restricted in her ordinary life. Her place was the home, from which she could venture only upon few occasions; she was not allowed to meet her husband's friends or to dine with them even in her own home; and she was even denied companionship with other women of her class. She was deprived of educa-



tional advantages. She was, primarily, a mechanism for the production of legitimate offspring. Her narrowness of interest and lack of education usually made her a totally unsatisfactory companion for her cultured husband, who spent his days in the market place discussing philosophy and Greek affairs.

The life of the Athenian male outside the home, however, was not devoid of feminine companionship. A group of brilliant women, known as the *hetaerae*, became the public associates of many of the Greek citizens and in some cases achieved positions of eminence and power in the affairs of state. Men could take women from this group as mistresses without great public condemnation for, from our point of view, the standards of sex morality demanded of them were lax. Despite this fact, absolute chastity was demanded on the part of the wife. In other words, the so-called double standard of morality obtained in Greek society. Naturally under such a system sons were held in high esteem, while daughters, regarded as inferior, were looked upon as a misfortune, and infanticide was freely practiced. Prior to the naming of the child, the Greek father could arbitrarily decide whether or not it was to be exposed to death.

Marriage among the Greeks was, as among the Hebrews, essentially a group concern. It was the means by which the family could be perpetuated, property transmitted, and the worship of the family gods carried on. Parents arranged marriages with little reference to the wishes of the young people. Here again marriage was regarded not as a mechanism for satisfying the needs of bride and groom, but rather as a means to further the interests of the families of the parents. Although marriage was essentially a religious matter, it was private in nature; the father, representing the ancestral gods, could perform the necessary ceremonies, and no external religious or political sanction was needed for the union.

Typical of all the Greeks was the subordination of the individual to the welfare of the group. Since the small city-states were constantly at war and consequently were always

in need of soldiers, the domestic institutions had to be such as would satisfy this need. In Sparta, particularly, great care was taken to ensure unions which would produce strong, virile offspring. In consequence, men who were impotent with age or who were deficient in physique would sometimes encourage the mating of their wives with younger and more vigorous men and would claim the offspring as their own.

### Plato's variant ideas

Certain of the Greek philosophers, whose writings have been so significant in the thought of the Western world, advanced ideas on domestic life which were quite at variance with the customs of their day. Thus Plato, in his *Republic*, proposed a eugenics program, by means of which the most gifted women should mate with superior men to produce the highest possible type of offspring. The children from these unions, it was proposed, should be separated from their parents and reared in state nurseries by persons especially fitted for the task. Weaklings should be exposed and destroyed. Plato also presented the then radical idea that woman is not innately different from man; that she possesses the same capacities and abilities, but in a lesser degree; and that she should, therefore, be given education and training the same as men in order that she might develop her capacities and become the true companion of man. These revolutionary ideas appear to have produced no immediate changes in Greek domestic life, the reason being that although they were in some cases accepted in theory they were not applied in practice. During the Renaissance, however, when Plato's philosophy was re-emphasized in the general revival of classical learning, these ideas took on a new vigor and became a slow leaven whose influence may be observed in a series of developing trends which have become more and more pronounced and important in our modern domestic institutions. Except for this later revival of Greek philosophy, the influence of the Greeks on modern domestic practices has come down to us indirectly; that is, through their influence on other peoples, especially the Romans.

## MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY AMONG THE ROMANS

Roman domestic institutions, like those of the Hebrews and the Greeks, varied too widely during successive historical periods to permit simple, accurate generalizations. First a simple agricultural community, Rome was gradually drawn into contact with every cultural group of the Italian peninsula and eventually of the whole Mediterranean world. All the while internal changes were taking place, and new cultural influences were being brought to bear upon Roman life. In consequence, customary practices relative to marriage and the family underwent change, just as did other features of Roman civilization.

### Characteristic features during the earlier period

The domestic institutions of the legendary period and of the early republic were highly patriarchal, offering perhaps the most extreme example of patriarchal control ever known. The Roman father had power over all members of the household—over the males throughout his entire lifetime, and over the females until their marriage. The only limitation on his power was that he must seek the advice of the large family, or *gens*, before making certain important decisions. Thus he was required to hold a family conference before condemning a son to death or to slavery; having called the council, however, he acted upon his own judgment with or without the approval of the group.

In economic matters the Roman father enjoyed great power; he enjoyed control over all property and earnings with but one limitation—property must always be kept within the *gens*; not even he could alienate it. During his lifetime neither the mother nor the children had any property rights of their own. When the patriarch died the property was divided equally among the members of the family—the sons, the widow, and the unmarried daughters each receiving a portion. In practice, however, the estate was ordinarily held intact, either through agreement by the heirs or in accordance with the request of the father. This extreme power of the Roman



patriarch was not that of an absolute monarch who held the office in his own right; it was delegated to him principally because of his role as priest in the worship of the ancestral gods.

The position of the mother and children in early Rome was probably not nearly so servile as the statement of the powers of the father seems to indicate. The Roman wife was not confined to her apartments, as was the case among the Greeks; in fact, she was mistress of the home, performing tasks herself, and supervising the work of the servants. She helped her husband officiate at the altar of the family gods. When she appeared on the streets men were expected to make way for her as a mark of respect and honor.

The early Romans, like the Hebrews and Greeks, regarded marriage and divorce as a private matter. Marriage was something to be decided on by the families of the bride and groom without public, political, or religious sanction. The parents arranged the union in accordance with the interests of the families rather than the desires of the couple concerned. The parents were, however, limited in their choice by class differences; until after the year 445 B. C., patricians might not intermarry with plebeians and at the same time maintain their status. Both marriage and divorce remained outside the jurisdiction of a judicial or religious tribunal down to the time of the Christian emperors (about 300 A. D.).

The early Roman marriage ceremony consisted mainly in the transfer of the wife from the power of her father to that of her husband; this was effected by introducing her to the worship of her husband's ancestors. According to a custom which developed in a later period, the wife remained under the power of her father even after marriage. In questions of divorce, the right rested primarily with the husband during the early period of Roman history, but was seldom invoked, and then only for serious offenses, such as adultery, or for barrenness. The failure to produce legitimate offspring for the continuance of the family indicated that the wife had failed in her supreme duty, and thus constituted unquestioned ground for divorce.

### The effect of Roman expansion on the patriarchal system

With the growth of Rome towards world power, new influences began to impinge upon her social organization and to exert a profound effect on her domestic institutions. Her increasing participation in wars, especially in those conquests requiring the absence of large numbers of men from home for protracted periods of time, led to the shifting of more and more responsibility to women, who thus came to assume an increasingly important share in the management of their husbands' affairs and in the direction of the estates. Moreover, the enormous losses of man power during these wars tended towards an unbalancing of the numbers of the two sexes, thus making it impossible for many women to secure husbands for support and protection.

Important economic changes likewise helped toward the breakdown of the earlier patriarchal life. The small farmer, who at the time of Cincinnatus was the backbone of Roman citizenry, gradually lost his land to the powerful military and civil officials who were the chief beneficiaries of the immense wealth that poured into Rome as a result of her conquests. Rome thus lost the sturdy, independent, self-respecting agricultural class, and in its place gained two groups: one the idle, rich landowners, whose immense estates were worked by thousands of slaves and who themselves disdained manual labor; the other, the disgruntled, dispossessed farmers who became a class of discontented wage earners. Added to these disturbing changes was the growth of a high degree of individualism resulting from several revolutionary influences, chief of which were (1) an increase in urban population; (2) the multiplication of contacts with distant cultures; and (3) greater mobility of the population, due largely to a great increase of foreign tradesmen.

With such profound changes within the social structure it was inevitable that Roman domestic institutions should be altered. Three significant results should be noted: (1) The position of woman was elevated. She had assumed numerous economic and political responsibilities during the absence of

men at war, and had proved her worth. Gradually as she became economically independent she was granted a legal and social status almost equal to that of man. Marriage was no longer the only way in which she could obtain a tolerable social position. (2) With the decay of the citizenry, marriage and the family lost many of their former functions, and the domestic group ceased to be the basic social unit to which men or women owed their first allegiance. The proportion of married persons declined to such an extent that some of the Roman emperors became alarmed, especially as the decrease in marriage was accompanied by a severe decline in the birth rate. At the same time, with the number of marriages on the decline, there was an increase in the practice of divorce. Morals deteriorated, partly because of the new species of immorality which were introduced from Greece. Laws were passed penalizing celibacy and childlessness, but they seem to have had little effect. (3) The extreme degree of control which the Roman patriarch had exercised over his children during the earlier period was curtailed. The first significant change in this direction came when a son who had obtained property in the performance of military duties was granted the right to dispose of it by will. The right was then extended to all men who had been honorably discharged from the army. Then the father's right to inflict severe punishment was lessened, and in the time of Justinian the exposure of children was forbidden. These improvements in the status and rights of children were due not only to the increase in individualism but also to the influence of Christianity and to the developing idea of a natural law which was founded on justice—a conception which was gaining a wide acceptance in Rome as a basis for civil legislation.

The decadence of Roman domestic institutions has been vividly presented by some writers as affording an object lesson to the present generation. The rise in the position of women, the decline of domestic religion, the concentration of wealth, the increase of individualism and of selfish pleasure-seeking, and the decline in the birth rate—all are noted with alarm by some who feel that America is following the course of Rome



and is allowing her culture to become decadent. Some of these aspects of the present-day situation which are the center of interest for many modern thinkers will be discussed briefly in the following chapter.

## THE CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE UPON DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS

The rise of Christianity was destined to have a profound influence; first by way of modifying radically some of the Roman practices, and secondly by placing a stamp upon domestic institutions that has endured down to our day. This in spite of the fact that Jesus himself had little to say about domestic practices; He apparently accepted the institutions of His time as normal, and raised no questions concerning them except in the matter of divorce.

### Teachings of the Apostle Paul

The views of the early Christian Fathers were more directly influenced by the teachings of Paul than by those of Christ. This enthusiastic disciple, expecting the end of the world to occur within his generation, sought to turn the attention of the people from the things of this world, including domestic life, and to direct their thoughts toward a preparation for the Kingdom of God, which he thought to be close at hand. Marriage was therefore not important as a means of producing offspring for the continuance of future generations. It would be better, then, according to Paul, if people would control their sensual desires and refrain from marrying; if, however, they could not restrain their impulses, it would be better for them to marry so that they would not be tempted into adultery.

On the basis of their interpretation of Paul's teachings, some of the Church Fathers developed the theory that there were four levels of sex relations which were successively less commendable: (1) celibacy, (2) marriage with a high degree of continence, (3) marriage with little restraint, and (4) adultery. Marriage was therefore a choice of the lesser of evils, a relation to be entered upon only by those who were not strong enough to withstand the temptations of the flesh.

From this point of view it was conceived as essentially a physical union. The idea that the marriage relation might afford social and spiritual values in addition to sensual gratification, although theoretically recognized by the Church, was strikingly absent from most of the early Christian writings on the subject. The idea that a celibate life is especially pleasing to God developed rapidly under the influence of the Church and contributed to a widespread movement of asceticism. Religious orders, sworn to celibacy, arose and became strong; and the Church prohibited the marriage of the clergy, who were expected to lead a life of celibate purity.

Paul also believed in the inferiority of woman. Accepting the Adam and Eve story of creation, he held that woman was made for the glory of man. All women partook with Eve of the position of the temptress, who was likely to lead man into sin. Woman must therefore be exceedingly careful so to act as not to lead man into temptation; she must dress modestly and act shamefacedly. A married woman must subject herself to her husband, keep quiet in public places, and ask questions only in her home. Man was, however, commanded to respect woman and treat her as the "weaker vessel."

### **Changes resulting from Christian influences**

So long as the Christians remained a persecuted minority in the Roman populace no widespread influences could be looked for; but when Christianity was elevated to the position of the state church of Rome (in the fourth century), Christian ideas and ideals became current and to a degree enforceable. They then began to work profound changes in the domestic institutions of Roman society. The changes are significant not only for the period in which they occurred, but for our own time and culture as well, since they have fixed and colored many of the ideas, beliefs, and practices which cluster about domestic institutions today. This statement is to some degree true of the whole Christian world and decidedly true in respect to certain religious groups within that world. Let us observe briefly what some of those changes were.

The early Church followed the usual procedure of religious

institutions in its contacts with other elements of the social order and accepted, uncritically for a time, the current domestic customs. In Rome, for example, it did not interfere with marriage for almost three centuries, except to reserve the right to hallow it by bestowing God's blessing upon it. But this blessing was not compulsory, nor was it at first insisted upon as essential to a valid union. The early efforts of the Church were directed toward the enforcement of certain prohibitions upon marriage, and the limitation of divorce and subsequent freedom of remarriage. From the time of its earliest contact with pagan Rome, however, the Christian Church set up against the laxness of Roman morals a standard of purity in sex conduct. Adultery was condemned in extreme terms. Even adultery on the part of the man, which had been condoned in Hebrew traditions, was now vigorously denounced. St. Augustine took the extreme position that adultery by the man was worse than by the woman, inasmuch as man, being, presumably, of a superior type, was more able to withstand temptation. Likewise the Christian idea of a lifelong marriage union, created and sustained by the Church, contrasted sharply with the then prevalent Roman custom of divorce and remarriage at will. The Church permitted divorce only upon grounds of adultery, and it prohibited the remarriage of divorced persons, thus taking an attitude at variance with the Roman position that divorce depended wholly upon the desires of the parties concerned. The Christian emphasis upon the subordinate position of woman also was opposed to the then prevalent Roman practice which granted woman a status practically equal to that of man. Emphasis upon the sacredness of life and the doctrine of the damnation of the unbaptized set the Church sharply against the practices of abortion and infanticide to which the Romans had frequently resorted.

Gradually the influence of the Church made itself felt along all of these lines. With the acceptance of Christianity by Constantine and later emperors, the Christian point of view gradually prevailed over the practices of Rome and set the pattern for domestic life. In proportion as the Church came



to stress the importance of marriage it insisted that the union of husband and wife be regarded as a religious rather than as a civil or private matter. The theory of marriage as one of the religious sacraments, made in heaven and indissoluble by man, developed out of this emphasis. These are some of the major changes which followed in the wake of Christianity.

### EARLY TEUTONIC INFLUENCES

#### Characteristics of German domestic institutions

The Germanic peoples who invaded the empire of the Caesars—including Britain—from the closing years of the fourth until well into the sixth century, made their contribution to our background of domestic institutions, influencing, but not revolutionizing, practices that had existed in the lands they conquered.

These barbarians exhibited a strong domestic organization, of which the basic unit was the *sippe*. The *sippe* was a group of kindred, by blood or adoption, descended from the grandchildren of two common ancestors. This bilateral group—which included persons related through both paternal and maternal lines—was important in giving us one part of our contemporary pattern of tracing kinship.

The *sippe*, or great family, was the fundamental social unit. Small families existed within it; but they had powers only by permission of the larger group. The *sippe* could protect children from their fathers; it acted as a guardian of widows and orphans; it managed the estates; it was responsible for the conduct of its members; it avenged them when wronged and paid *wergild* when they had wronged a member of another *sippe*. Membership in such a social unit was of utmost importance to every person. The child came under its protecting care almost from the time of birth—but not quite; until it had tasted food it was not admitted to the *sippe*; up to that time it remained under the control of the father, who might expose the infant if he saw fit. Thereafter the measure of authority exercised by the father was limited by the customs of the *sippe*. This measure of paternal control continued until

the child reached his majority, usually at the age of fourteen or fifteen years, when he was admitted to the privileges and responsibilities of a freeman. From that time on he was responsible for his own behavior.

Marriage among the German tribes was primarily an economic arrangement. The man or his relatives bargained with the relatives of the girl concerning the price to be paid for the bride. Even until recent times the customary expression "to purchase a wife" (*ein Weib kaufen*) was used in Germany with reference to marriage. Marriage was purely a private matter—that is, a concern of the *sippe*—until the later Middle Ages, and was consummated after the proper payment simply by transferring the wife to the power of the husband. Definitely subordinated to her mate, the wife was expected to obey him. She was regarded primarily as an economic asset and was desired as a diligent and trustworthy worker and as the producer of legitimate offspring.

#### **The compromise between conflicting Germanic and Christian ideas**

When the Germanic customs came into conflict with the teachings of the Christian Church, there were prolonged struggles, usually resulting in some sort of compromise. For example, in the ninth century the church dogma that marriage was one of the seven sacraments and as such demanded a religious ceremony for its consummation came into conflict with the Germanic idea that marriage is a private matter or a civil contract. According to the custom particularly prevalent in England, a man and a woman could perform their own marriage ceremony by merely repeating the words "I take thee to be my wedded wife (or husband)"—a custom, it may be said in passing, which was the origin of the so-called "common-law" marriages that have persisted down to our own day, and are recognized in many commonwealths of the United States as legal. The Church could not accept these clandestine unions as meeting its requirements, and yet it was unwilling to declare with finality that they were not valid, particularly because of the suffering of the children who would thus be classed as illegitimate. A compromise was therefore introduced into

canonical law in the form of a distinction between legal and valid marriages. Under this, a legal marriage was one which was contracted in conformity with the rules and with the sanction of the Church; a valid marriage was one contracted without the knowledge and sanction of the Church. The Church, however, discouraged merely valid marriages by severe penalties in the form of penance.

### THE INFLUENCE OF FEUDALISM AND CHIVALRY

It will be recalled that under the feudal system, the lands of western Europe were divided into estates held by the tenant or vassal at the discretion of some overlord who expected rent in the form of military and other services. The more powerful of the nobility might or might not be directly responsible to the king. The development of this feudal landed aristocracy with almost sovereign powers exercised some important influences upon domestic institutions.

#### The status of women under feudalism

The feudal world was a man's world, in which woman lost a considerable number of the rights which had been gradually accruing to her. Her rights to property were severely restricted; she no longer was competent to serve as guardian of her own children; and legally she was a nonentity. "Husband and wife are one person and that person is the husband"; such was the form in which one eminent student described the legal relationship of husband and wife. This decline in the status of the wife was traceable to changes in the social values which were introduced by feudalism. Military exploits had become paramount in importance, and the overlord, looking to his vassals for military services, could more easily exact his demands from a man than from a woman. The overlord was desirous, therefore, that every woman who was heir to an estate should have a master. Feudalism thus tended to keep woman in an inferior position.

At the same time, a strong countercurrent may be observed which tended to improve woman's lot. During periods of rest from warfare the lords of feudal estates were able to de-



vote their leisure to the improvement of manners. Because the very isolation of the feudal castle forced the family members to turn to one another for companionship, a close rapport and deep sympathy developed at times between husband and wife. It became natural, too, for the wife to take over many responsibilities during the absence of her husband. Thus there was a gradual improvement in the position of the lady of the castle.

### Chivalry and romantic love

Chivalry has afforded one of the most fruitful fields for the play of the imagination of the novelist with a romantic bent. Chivalry, at its best, emphasized the ideal and spiritual aspects of love, as contrasted with the sensual conceptions of the preceding periods. It led many a young champion to exhibit unusual endurance and courage for the honor of the lady of his choice. But while it thus tended to set woman on a pedestal and to make of her an object to be worshiped and loved, it possibly tended also to deprive her of any deeper significance in social life.

Chivalry placed great emphasis upon the form and manners of love-making. Formalized codes developed which prescribed elaborate ritualistic etiquette in addressing one's lady, and which suggested flowery, formal phrases for the proper declaration of one's love. These extremes of formalism seem amusing to the young lover of today, but we should recognize in them the higher appreciation of the spiritual and social aspects of romantic love as it developed under chivalry as contrasted with the more sordid unions which had preceded it. In that the ideals of chivalry form the major basis of the romantic traditions of modern mating, this change in attitude toward marriage was significant.

Actual practices often fell short of the chivalric ideal. Marriages were still ordinarily arranged by the parents with little regard to the wishes of the prospective bride and groom. Frequently the couple found themselves incompatible and incapable of forming that ideal spiritual union which was demanded by the chivalric pattern. Many a lonely woman,

tempted by the possibility of a romantic relationship with some man of her own choice, claimed the right to enter into such a union outside the marriage bond. Husbands were expected to shut their eyes to such arrangements and perhaps to form other love unions of their own. Ideally, chivalry afforded an attractive pattern of marriage; actually, most marriages failed to fit into its mold.

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE RENAISSANCE

The intense intellectual activity which characterized the Renaissance was accompanied by important changes in the social life and education of women in Italy. To an increasing degree, women came to be recognized as capable of understanding and appreciating the works of the ancient writers, and many of them achieved distinction in the realm of learning. The breaking away from the traditional molds of domestic behavior was, however, not immediately accomplished. The Renaissance produced no significant changes in marriage rites or in the status of women.

During the Renaissance many of the ideas of philosophers of classical times were revived, among them Plato's ideas concerning domestic relations. In his doctrine of love between man and woman, Plato had emphasized the ideal of the beautiful, which made it a steppingstone toward the knowledge and appreciation of the eternal goodness and perfect beauty of God. This concept gained wide acceptance and approval, in theory, during the Renaissance period, but was not put into practice as the expected, normal relation between husband and wife. Nevertheless, the Renaissance impulse toward individualism together with the revival of classical learning helped to lay the foundation for changes which were to appear during later times.

When the intellectual ferment of the Renaissance took a religious turn in Germany, Martin Luther, as the leader of the Protestant Revolt, turned part of his lightning against some of the teachings of the Catholic Church on the subject of marriage. He first made his influence felt through his renunci-

ation of marriage as a religious sacrament and his affirmation of it as a civil contract. German leaders quickly followed Luther's teaching, and within a short time the Protestant German states assumed control over marriage. English leaders accepted Luther's position in theory but were not disposed to put it into practice. It was not until 1653, when the Puritans under Cromwell were in power, that a civil celebration of marriage was made obligatory by law; and this law remained in effect only seven years. In the United States the civil nature of marriage was affirmed in the regulations of Puritan New England. Virginia and other southern colonies, however, adhered closely to the point of view of the Anglican Church.

Luther's second main influence arose from his opposition to the celibacy of the clergy. He acted upon his own teachings and took a wife. In this innovation he was again quickly followed by German leaders; but the English Church proved more conservative, holding tenaciously to the old forms in practice, while giving lip service to the new point of view.

Probably the most important effect of the Renaissance was the emphasis upon individualism as contrasted with the medieval idea that the individual should be subordinated to the group. This new emphasis had no immediate revolutionary effects upon the forms of domestic institutions. The modifications which have resulted from it appeared slowly and gradually, and it is only now that we are reaping the most abundant harvest of domestic changes germinating from this seed. This is as we should expect, since it has always been characteristic of domestic institutions that they are, in their fundamental aspects, among the most tenacious elements of social organization, yielding to pressure slowly and gradually, sometimes long after corresponding changes have become manifest in other institutions.

#### DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS IN ENGLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

We shall not be able to consider the many variations in domestic practices that grew up in the national cultures of



Europe. We shall confine our attention to developments in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, inasmuch as the domestic institutions of England of that period are the direct ancestors of the forms which appeared and persisted in colonial America. It was the English institutions transplanted to America which gradually displaced those of the other emigrant cultural groups and furnished the models for our domestic practices.

### **The subordinate position of the wife**

Domestic institutions in England, in accordance with the forms which had been handed down from the past, were patriarchal in form during this period. Woman was definitely subordinated to man, having practically no legal rights. During the lifetime of her husband her personality was merged with his. She had no rights of guardianship over her children, even after her husband's death. Until 1663 the right of the husband to inflict physical punishment upon his wife was upheld by the courts, and this practice persisted among some social classes in England until a much later time.

During the eighteenth century, it is true, the wife acquired some rights to property. Then the custom of "settlements" became popular, and the married woman was permitted to retain control of her own property. This change, however, was looked upon with disfavor by the husbands, who had grown accustomed to the right of control. Alexander, an eighteenth-century writer, voiced the discontent of the men when he spoke of the custom as an "inequitable bargain" by which "the husband is disbarred from enjoying any of the rights of matrimony except the person of his wife." In spite of the increasing concessions to women, English marriage long served to protect private property and to secure its control and inheritance by males.

Having little possibility of becoming economically independent, the English woman came to recognize her primary function to be the making of a good marriage. Failure to marry left her a lifelong financial burden upon unwilling parents or relatives and constituted the unquestioned sign of

social failure. Charm was woman's greatest asset. Modest reserve, female delicacy, an attitude of admiration for and inferiority to possible suitors constituted her most effective technique in achieving marriage. Other education than that which would equip her for marriage was regarded as superfluous and even harmful, inasmuch as it would make her lose her maidenly modesty and become less alluring to her possible future master. A change in the point of view came with the restoration of Charles II in 1660. The English fashionable society, using as its model the life of the court, entered upon a period of moral deterioration which continued throughout the eighteenth century, and woman, true to her major task of getting a husband, adapted her ways to the new demands.

### **Influences of the revolutionary period**

It will be recalled that the closing decades of the eighteenth century marked the beginning of a widespread revolt against the traditions and institutions which had dominated early modern society, and that, thenceforth, rapid change became a characteristic of Western culture. The social changes included changes in domestic practices. In France the influence was immediate, principally in the direction of elevating the legal status of the wife and children and weakening the patriarchal character of the family. Outside of France the revolutionary currents affected domestic institutions in varying degrees.

In England "alarming" radical ideas of liberty and equality were spread. Mary Wollstonecraft, a woman of some distinction, saw the broader implications of these new ideals and insisted upon their application to women. Woman, like man, she maintained, had the right to be treated as an individual, valuable in herself, and not merely as an adjunct to some superior male. These ideas, which began to take deep root for the first time since the days of the Roman Empire, slowly diffused from group to group and marked the effective beginning of what may be called the Woman's Movement.

Relations between parents and children gradually became more kindly and friendly during this period, as the ideas of

individualism were accepted and applied to the relations of parent to child. Discipline became less severe, and protective legislation was enacted which was the forerunner of many of our modern statutes.

### DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

With the colonization of the Atlantic coast in North America English culture was introduced into that part of the New World. Notwithstanding the presence of minority groups from other countries, it was the English culture that dominated colonial society, and the English influence that set the main patterns of colonial marriage and family life. It must be remembered, however, that the thirteen colonies were more or less isolated from one another and that differences in the regional cultures developed. Consequently there was no one domestic pattern concerning which accurate generalizations can be made. Typical characteristics of colonial domestic practices can best be revealed perhaps by comparisons among three regions: (1) the northern colonies, (2) the southern colonies, and (3) the frontier.

#### Contrasting features in northern and southern colonies

On the whole, the northern colonies preserved in their domestic life a close copy of the institutions of the middle-class Puritans in England, with, of course, some adaptations necessary to the new conditions of colonial life. The Puritans regarded marriage as a civil contract, and divorce as justifiable on such grounds as adultery, cruelty, desertion, or refusal to support. Marriage was held in high esteem, in part because of the desire for large families to help settle the vast areas of territory and to aid in effective protection against the Indians. Woman's position was typically that of the English middle-class wife; it was, however, somewhat higher, owing, first, to the fact that woman was economically indispensable, and second, to the scarcity of women in the colonies—a situation which gave rise to competition among the males for wives. Courtship was brief, and both widows and widowers remarried



shortly after the deaths of their spouses. The economic emphasis is clearly evident in the open haggling and bargaining about marriage settlements so abundantly illustrated in contemporary records. In keeping with the demands of the time, children became independent and self-supporting at an early age.

Domestic life in the southern colonies was patterned after that of the English manor. The traditions of the Anglican Church led to the acceptance of marriage as a religious rather than as a civil contract. Divorce was frowned upon except for extreme causes; South Carolina refused to allow divorce on any ground whatsoever, an unwillingness which is evidenced even in present-day legislation. Local influences, too, had their effect in the South. Slavery particularly exercised an effect upon domestic life. Since white and Negro children could not be entirely segregated, some of the standards of the illiterate blacks inevitably had their effect upon the whites, with a consequent disintegration of some of the bonds uniting the white family. Standards of sex morality were sometimes lax, as evidenced particularly in the facts of miscegenation. The slaves themselves had, on the whole, an unsatisfactory and uncertain domestic life, dependent for its continuation upon the wishes of the owner.

### **Influences of the frontier**

The conditions of life in the frontier communities were different in many respects from those in the more stable and longer-settled areas to the eastward, and these conditions deeply affected pioneer domestic practices. The frontier family became of necessity a closely knit unit, largely self-sustaining and self-reliant. Every member of this unit had his part to play. The family was largely dependent on itself for the food, clothing, education, protection, recreation, and religious practices of its members. Its relative loneliness and isolation forced the members to look to one another for companionship, and fostered a closeness of feeling sometimes amounting to a kind of clannishness. The solidarity of the group was further enhanced by a common interest in protection

from the ever-present menace of Indian attack. The stern exactions of frontier life naturally gave to the father a dominating position in the family, an importance shared to some extent by the sons. The responsibility of boys in domestic economy was a heavy one. At an early age they matured and entered upon a role of independence. This tended to weaken in many respects the patriarchal control which had characterized earlier periods.

The westward-moving frontier has been a significant factor in the development of American domestic institutions, particularly as they involve woman's place in the scheme of things. Adjustment to the crude conditions which characterized early colonial life was a never-ending process; there was always one part of our population that was in a pioneering stage. When we add to this phenomenon in American life the circumstance that pioneer life developed a need for woman's service that tended to give her a position of near equality with man, we can understand why the movement toward woman suffrage was strong in America and also why it developed most rapidly in the newest sections—that is, in the West. The large measure of self-reliance and social freedom of the frontier girl helped to lay the basis for the freedom of the American girl of the present day.

### **Some consequences of the Industrial Revolution**

Some of the general but far-reaching social consequences of the Industrial Revolution have already been indicated. No institutions existent in countries invaded by the machine technique have wholly escaped its influence; few have been more deeply affected than domestic institutions. In the United States traditional attitudes and practices in the field of domestic relations have been altered, and in some cases broken—particularly in the great industrial centers—under the impact of a machine civilization.

With the development of power machinery, the center of industry was moved from the home or small shop to the factory. The married woman who remained at home found her condition fundamentally altered. With the continued

growth of more efficient large-scale factory production, many of the duties which she had once performed within the household were taken over by industry. Hitherto she had played a major role in supplying clothing and providing food for the family. The numerous tasks which these responsibilities had imposed were now greatly reduced.

At least three important results of removing work from the home may be noted: (1) The well-to-do woman, being freed from the necessity of doing so much work in the household, can now turn her attention to other interests. Her broadened activity in political, religious, educational, and artistic life today is partially due to the greater leisure which is hers. (2) The ability of woman to enter the industrial and professional fields as an independent individual, her consequent economic freedom, and her recognized status make marriage relatively optional with an increasing number of women. She no longer looks upon the acquiring of a husband and the directing of his household as the only possible road to a contented existence. (3) Woman's decreasing economic services in the home, moreover, make her less indispensable to man, and a larger proportion of men marry either later in life or not at all.

If the Industrial Revolution is measured by its indirect as well as by its direct influences, it may be safely regarded as the most important single force effecting the transition from the former stabilized patriarchal to the present-day individualized form of domestic institution. One of these indirect influences is that of urbanization. The amazing growth of cities following the Industrial Revolution has made the urban community the dominant pattern of our civilization; for although only slightly more than half of our population actually lives in cities of 2,500 or more, the city sets the patterns for contemporary life. The congestion of population in crowded sections of cities with the consequent limitation of space and the crowding of whole families into inadequate quarters where privacy is impossible and decency is difficult, leads to many tensions and disruptions. Under such conditions social life cannot be centered in the home. Neither children nor adults



have adequate facilities for entertaining their friends, and recreation is removed almost entirely from the domestic circle.

More important than crowding are the extreme mobility and anonymity of the city populations. The breakup of the stable "large family" group including uncles, aunts, and cousins was inevitable under conditions of modern urban life, in which specialization and the division of labor necessitate changes in place of abode. Only the small family as an interdependent economic unit can maintain its closeness of relation in such a social order. Even this small group does not remain permanent, the children frequently leaving the home as soon as they become independent and often separating themselves from their parents by hundreds or thousands of miles.

Within the city many small-family units tend to have only secondary contacts with their neighbors. In the more congested districts of the large metropolis, members of a family often know practically nothing about the people next door. Stories that are sometimes heard of brothers who have lived for years in the same apartment building without knowing of each other's whereabouts are only slightly exaggerated reflections of the reality. Under conditions of anonymity such as this, the domestic group is largely freed from the customary restrictions which would be placed upon it in a more stable, primary community. It is free to mold its behavior according to its own desires, without praise or censure from the people next door. If, perchance, community pressure is exerted against a certain family which has deviated too far from approved lines, it is relatively easy for it to move to another urban area where the members find the community controls more to their liking.

Not only can the urban domestic group escape as a unit from many of the restrictions which it would formerly have encountered, but the members as individuals can do likewise. It is possible for a member to leave the home for an evening's recreation and within an hour be in the midst of almost any type of social standards he cares to find. He has some assurance that his choice of companions will not be known to his family or neighbors unless he cares to tell them.

Under such conditions, it is easy to see why the small family has emerged as an individualized unit and why even its solidarity is being threatened by the still greater individualization of its members. The modern urban community furnishes the most fertile soil for the growth of those ideas of individualism which have been taking firmer and firmer root since the time of the Renaissance.

### **Alien influences in our domestic life**

Successive waves of immigrants have introduced into the United States a bewildering variety of cultures, which have not been reduced to homogeneity by our "melting pot." While the majority have come from European countries and have the same fundamental domestic patterns, we must recognize the presence of a significant body of representatives of African and Oriental cultures. As this cultural heterogeneity has become more pronounced as a result of the development of more effective forms of communication, especially newspapers, radio, and motion pictures, we have been continually bombarded by customs, ideas, and standards at variance with our own. These alien influences have poured in on us so rapidly that we have been unable to assimilate them and produce a stable culture complex. We are suffering, therefore, from a sort of cultural indigestion which has been aggravated by our own extreme individualism and anonymity. Thus in our own American society—true to the historical precedent of cosmopolitan Rome—the period of cultural diversity is marked by the disintegration of many important institutional forms, including those related to marriage and the family.

### **Increased knowledge of birth control**

The increase in the knowledge and practice of birth control constitutes another factor in our changing domestic institutions. Without discussing at this point the moral aspects of the practice, we must recognize the fact that information which makes birth control possible is rapidly being disseminated. The possibility of becoming parents only by choice has resulted in the proposal of a form of marital union known as the com-

panionate marriage. This proposal recognizes the desire of men and women to live together for purposes of companionship, but results in the postponement of parenthood either permanently or for an indefinite period. Some of the problems and points of view which revolve about companionate marriage will be examined later; the purpose here is merely to point to a developing trend in domestic life.

### MODERN DOMESTIC LIFE AS AN EXPRESSION OF INDIVIDUALISM

The growth of individualism and its significance in the development of domestic practices have been noticed incidentally in preceding paragraphs. In conclusion we shall mark this point with special emphasis. In a sense, our changing behavior in contemporary domestic life—our changing attitudes and practices—is an expression of this growing individualism. A brief summary of the fundamental changes that have affected domestic life in Western society since the Renaissance will perhaps make the matter clear. An increasing emphasis upon the worth of individual personality, a recognition of the equality of all persons, a heightened mobility of population, a greater freedom from economic dependence, a disruption of primary neighborhood life, and an increasing knowledge of birth control—all factors of which we have spoken earlier—have combined to make the person rather than the group the center of emphasis in modern social life. Domestic institutions reflect these changes in that they are no longer regarded primarily as the method of perpetuating and prolonging a particular group name, as the mechanism for the control of property, or as the means of subordinating woman to the domination of man. Marriage is increasingly being recognized as a tool by which free, mature persons consciously attempt to secure certain individual satisfactions without much reference to the effect of their behavior upon the broader social life of their time. Perhaps the tendency toward individualism is being overdone. Perhaps there is a need for re-emphasis upon a stabilized social organization—to be at-



tained, if necessary, at the expense of individual preference and freedom.

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## CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS

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ONE CAN HARDLY READ the preceding account of the rapid and far-reaching social changes following the Industrial Revolution without feeling that many of the earlier attitudes and practices in domestic relations are now struggling to survive in an uncongenial environment. This is but another way of saying that some formerly accepted features of marriage and the family appear poorly adapted to present conditions. Here lies the general explanation of the contemporary flood of books, articles, and platform discussions on the subjects of marriage and the family. Certain aspects of the domestic problem have come to be regarded as of such vital importance as to impel thoughtful persons to their consideration and study. They are asking: What is happening to the institutions of marriage and the family that they no longer appear to exercise the functions that they formerly did? Are these institutions outworn and no longer a necessary part of our culture? If they are still necessary, are they in need of radical modification to adjust them to contemporary needs? And if such need does exist, what are the possibilities and means of adequate modification of them? It is not possible here to discuss all the factors involved in these questions. An attempt will be made simply to indicate some of the more important problems, and to present some of the pertinent evidence on both

sides of the questions to serve as bases for tentative conclusions. Final solutions could not be offered other than in a dogmatic spirit.

### THE PERMANENCE OF DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS

The question as to whether our domestic institutions can endure may appear absurd to those who take these basic institutions for granted, and to those who have not given critical consideration to the problems of change in social organization. If institutions are to be regarded as tools which society fashions for the satisfaction of human needs, it is clear that they must change from time to time in order to maintain their adjustment to changing conditions. For purposes of illustration one may turn to the field of material culture. We know that many implements used by men of the Stone Ages have long been discarded. Similarly, one may discover that the path of history is strewn with outworn ideas, customs, and institutional forms. Since the same principle of change is active today, is it not possible that our domestic institutions have outlived their usefulness and should be scrapped or modified? Let us summarize some of the lines of thought that seem to point toward an affirmative answer.

#### Loss of functions of the family

A survey of historical trends shows that the family has gradually but surely been shorn of many functions which once characterized it. The dawn of written history reveals the domestic group as the center of social life—a condition characteristic, as far as our information extends, of both the early Eastern and Western peoples. Prior to the time when elaborate civilizations with great cities as their centers of diffusion had developed, the large family group was an almost self-sufficient unit. In the pastoral period of Hebrew life and the early periods of Greek and Roman history the family was the center of a majority of the functions of social life; it was the economic center for both production and consumption; it was the religious unit whose worship was centered around the household gods; it fulfilled the functions of political organiza-



tion and control except in times of greatest emergency; it was an important educational unit through which the cultural heritage of the past was transmitted to each new generation; and it was the recognized and sanctioned means for reproducing and rearing offspring.

With the growing complexity of social life came the rise of new institutions which took over, in whole or in part, many of the functions formerly belonging to the family. The extremes to which modern civilization has gone in removing the functions from the family may be illustrated by a brief summary:

Political functions have been almost completely transferred to the state. The individual family comes into being and continues only in conformity with law. The rights and duties of parents and children are defined by law. The state considers itself the ultimate guardian of the children, and maintains the right to interfere whenever it thinks necessary. The family has no right to make and enforce laws—other than those of a mild disciplinary nature—even within its own confines, except by permission of the state. The adult members of the family have, of course, the right to exercise their influence as citizens of the state, but in the United States the family as a unit has retained practically no political functions.

Religious functions have been largely taken over by the church. Even the religious acts formerly practiced in the home, such as family worship and the saying of grace at meals, are disappearing. Religious education, except that which develops out of the spontaneous, informal relations of parents and children, has been taken over by such organizations as the weekly Bible School, the Daily Vacation Bible School, and special classes in religion. Priests, rabbis, ministers, missionaries, and other specialized religious leaders have practically monopolized religious functions.

As previously pointed out, the Industrial Revolution inevitably drove the production of economic goods from the home. No longer does the housewife spin the thread, or weave the cloth, and seldom does she sew the material into garments, the modern tendency being increasingly towards

the purchase of all clothing "ready made." Similarly the housewife procures her food in a condition more and more nearly ready for the table; she no longer raises the vegetables in her own garden but depends upon her grocer; she no longer bakes bread and pastry, but calls the delicatessen or bakery; she no longer cans her supply of fruits and vegetables for winter's use, but obtains them from the distributor for the industrialized cannery. The ability of the housewife to cook with a can opener is in reality much more than a subject for the witticisms of humorists. The rapid growth of public dining rooms and restaurants testifies to a still more recent trend to take not only the function of economic production but that of consumption out of the home. Without multiplying illustrations it seems fair to conclude that the family is at present of diminished importance as an economic unit.

The development of widespread public education has been relatively recent. Only two or three generations ago education was limited in many communities of the nation to the "three R's"; pupils started school at about the age of seven and continued but three or four years, with school in session only four or five months during the year. Now the regular session in most sections of the country is eight to ten months, with increasing emphasis being placed upon summer terms. Children are required by law to enter school at the age of six, generally, and to continue until they are at least fourteen. Attendance at high schools is coming to be expected of all children, and increasing numbers of students are attending colleges and universities. Professional curricula are being extended to six or more years above high school, with additional time required for internships and the like. The period of family control over the training of the child is still further shortened by the admission of children to school at an earlier age. Kindergartens, which admit the child at the age of five, are in many communities an accepted part of public education and are attracting more children each year; prekindergarten and nursery schools are becoming numerous, and are prepared to take the child as early as it can be separated from the mother.

Not only are children continuing in school for a longer period of time, but the elementary school is reaching into the home in still another way. Modern professional educators are requesting parents not to interfere with the child's education, not to try to teach him to read and study at home, but to leave the whole educational process to the school. With the addition of programs of directed play for the child's free hours, and the introduction of vocational schools, professional educators are striving for the almost complete removal of educational functions from the family unit.

It would seem that only the functions of physical reproduction and of child care still remain undisturbed in the family; even these are now being challenged on many sides. Many theorists, of whom the eugenists are outstanding, maintain that at present the family is not properly performing these functions. Even the more conservative reformers agree that too many defective children are being born, while the more radical ones declare that ultimately we shall have human reproduction reduced to a basis of scientific breeding, in which the mating of only the most fit will be permitted. Mating, the latter say, will be arranged upon a basis of selected physical criteria which are to be reproduced in the offspring, and will be independent of family and marriage ties. Such a change would remove the function of reproduction from the institution of marriage where traditionally it has always belonged. To accompany this program of scientific physical reproduction, some few reformers propose a corresponding program of institutional supervision and education for the infant. According to this plan the most advanced kind of medical and nursing care would be provided for the child, his diet would be carefully watched, and carefully trained teachers would transmit to him that part of the cultural heritage which he should learn. It is alleged that untrained mothers in ordinary homes do not afford the child the care and guidance necessary to develop his capacities to the limit. Thus the remaining important functions of marriage and the family are being challenged by some well-meaning contemporary reformers.



**Essential functions of modern domestic institutions**

If, as theorists assert, the functions of physical reproduction and early care of the child can be more adequately administered in specialized institutions, and if the educational, religious, political, economic, and recreational functions continue to be removed from the family, we might be strongly tempted to agree that the family as a social institution has been outgrown and is ready to be scrapped. Is this a justifiable conclusion, or do modern domestic institutions perform certain functions better than any other institution can perform them? Let us examine the arguments which support the belief in the importance of the family and marriage for contemporary civilization.

The evidence which is available at present indicates that the physical care of immature infants, especially of the very young ones, still remains the proper function of the family. Despite considerable advances in dietetics and nursing, no adequate substitutes have yet been found for mother's care in the early life and feeding of the child. The infant mortality rates of child-caring institutions are very high for young children, especially during the first year of life. Some of the institutions which have reported high death rates have apparently had good hygienic and sanitary conditions. The fact that the children admitted to such institutions are usually foundlings, and that they were therefore subjected to exposure prior to admission, may have been responsible for some of the deaths; but the same class of children when cared for in individual families showed a mortality rate materially less than that of the large social institutions. It is perhaps conceivable that future development of medical and dietetic knowledge may afford the child adequate physical care in the larger institution, but up to the present time no adequate substitute for the family has been found.

The human family performs another function which is basic, that of socialization. It is almost axiomatic in modern social theory that "human nature" is a product of group life. The offspring of man is not truly human at birth, but develops his

humanness—that is, those superorganic characteristics which are exclusively man's, and which mark him off from the animal world—only in intimate association with others. It is in the family that he gets his first adjustments to social life. It is there that he begins to develop his primary ideals, to take on the fundamental culture traits of his group, and to establish the first characteristic organization of his personality, all of which vitally affect the entire course of his life. The function of socialization is, for the human family, fully as important as that of physical care.

The function of socializing the child depends for its highest efficiency upon several factors, the most important of which are intimacy of contact and variety of social relationships. The infant develops his truly human traits in small, spontaneous, intimate, primary groups rather than in more formalized, secondary relationships. The family, a small intimate group, including as it does both sexes and persons of varying ages, affords the child both an intimate participation in primary relationships and a wide variety of contacts. One finds difficulty in even imagining a group which can ever take the place of the family as a means for the most efficient socialization of its members. This basic function probably cannot be fulfilled by any other group.

The human family contributes not only to the development of its immature members but also to the rejuvenation of the adults. Nothing is more likely to keep an adult from falling into a rut and from getting out of touch with the new developments of succeeding generations than an intelligent and sympathetic contact with growing children. Moreover, the development of self-sacrifice and tolerance—ideals of great social significance—may also be fostered in parents through contacts with their children.

Marriage, the relation of husband-wife, also performs some basic functions in contemporary civilization. One of these important functions is the control of relations between the sexes. In every culture, past and present, literate and pre-literate, man has felt the need of restricting the sex interest and has developed regulative codes of sex morals in the shape

of institutional organizations. This is true even though the form of marriage as we know it has not been universal either in time or in place. In fact, the variations in cultural codes of morality are so great that many observers, judging from superficial acquaintance and using their own standards of morality as the norm, have declared that some preliterate peoples are totally immoral. Such is not the case. Every people possesses a code of sex conduct which becomes discernible as soon as one understands its culture. Some form of marriage is universally one of the means by which such codes are made effective; this is another way of saying that promiscuity in sex relations has never been sanctioned by any total culture group.

A second basic function of modern marriage, one which persists in spite of recent challenges, is the procreation of children and the care of the mother during her consequent period of incapacity. This function of the marriage institution continues to be a highly important one in modern civilization, and will probably persist for at least a long time notwithstanding the efforts of radical eugenists. Care of the females who are incapacitated because of childbearing still remains an integral function of marriage notwithstanding the efforts of government to give aid to some such mothers. It is a likely consequence of woman's necessary function in childbearing that at least during a portion of her life she will always be more narrowly confined to the home and more dependent on others for support than man will be. Marriage, then, still performs this important function of support and protection.

A third essential function of modern marriage—that of providing intimate companionship—has become highly important in modern social life. The extreme mobility of modern life has led to the weakening of intimate neighborhood contacts and the loss of intimate, face-to-face, lifelong friendships for a large proportion of the population. Domestic institutions—especially marriage—form an intimate stable rock of enduring personal relations to which persons can cling in the rapidly changing currents of an impersonal civilization.



This companionship function of marriage deserves far greater emphasis in modern social life than has generally been accorded to it.

How, then, shall we interpret the changes which have taken place in the functions of marriage and the family? In general, they are to be regarded as reflections of the tendency toward the increased division of labor characteristic of complex civilizations. In simple cultures one generalized institution may possibly fulfill all of the necessary institutionalized functions, but in complex civilizations many specialized group patterns must develop. The rise of separate political, economic, religious, and educational institutions in our civilization is, therefore, directly in line with expectations. The family, like other institutions, is forced to operate within a limited range of human needs if it is to be an efficient unit of our complex civilization. The historical trends above outlined may be interpreted, therefore, as merely conforming to this tendency towards specialization, and not necessarily as challenging the future existence of specialized domestic institutions.

### SHOULD WE MODIFY THE FORMS OF DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS?

If we assume that domestic institutions are to remain as fundamental units of our culture, must we believe that they are to retain the same forms as in the immediate past? Will the relations of parent and child and of husband and wife retain their traditional forms and functions? Which elements should remain stable, and which should be changed? In order to arrive at some conclusions, let us first turn attention to some problems of marriage.

Although there have been many deviations, our traditional form of marriage has remained that of a permanent, monogamic union, dominated more or less completely by the husband, and normally resulting in the establishing of a family. This form was well adapted to the conditions of life in that man-made, relatively stable social organization which preceded the commercial and industrial revolutions; but large-scale

industrial production, greater urbanization of population, the breakup of the large-family unit, the increased mobility and anonymity of local life, the decay of local community control, the exaggeration of individualism, and the increase of woman's rights have created new conditions, which challenge the old marriage forms.

#### **Permanence of marriage relations**

Many facts seem to challenge the ideal of permanence as essential to satisfactory marriage relations. It is indisputable that a decreasing number of marriages are continued as life-time unions of husband and wife. The clearest and most unmistakable evidence of this lack of permanence is found in the divorce rate. Divorces have increased rapidly in the United States. The number reached a high point at 201,468 in 1929. From this point it dropped to 160,338 in 1932, owing in part to the influence of a severe economic depression. Some idea of the increase of divorce may be gained by examining the numbers of divorces for each 1,000 marriages. The number swelled from 62 divorces per 1,000 marriages in 1890, to 81 in 1900, to 84 in 1906, to 108 in 1916, to 148 in 1925, to 170 in 1930, and to a peak of 173 in 1931. It dropped to 163 in 1932, the last year for which data are available. In 1931 one divorce occurred on an average for every five and one-half marriages throughout the United States as a whole, while in some of the larger cities the expectation was one divorce for every three or four marriages. The highest divorce rates are found in the most highly urbanized sections of the country, with the exception of Reno, Nevada, where easy residence requirements attract prospective divorcees. Desertion and separation by mutual consent add their toll to marital disasters. The figures pertaining to these cases are more difficult to obtain and are less reliable than those of divorce. In so far as they are available they seem to indicate a decrease in the stability of marriage.

While the figures indicating the diminishing proportionate number of permanent marriages can scarcely be challenged in view of the available facts, varied interpretations of the

significance of the data are possible. One may interpret them to mean that unhappily married couples now feel more free to resort to divorce. Whereas formerly they would have tolerated the unhappy union, they now dare to dissolve it in the divorce court. The decrease in the degree of stigma attached to the divorcee has been an important factor in making public many marital incompatibilities formerly borne in silence. Then, too, the obtaining of a divorce does not necessarily mean that the parties involved have renounced permanent marriage as an ideal; they may still believe that a lifelong union is a desired goal, and may regard divorce merely as a means of rectifying the mistake made in the first marriage, and of securing freedom to form a permanent union with a more compatible mate.

Even granted that there is considerable truth in the preceding explanation, it is not wholly satisfactory, inasmuch as it neglects a significant change which has occurred in the attitude of many persons toward marriage, a change which is reflected in the feeling that great care need not be taken in the choice of a mate. Many young men and women are willing to try any seemingly desirable union, entering it with the definite mental reservation that if it does not prove satisfactory they may obtain a divorce and try again. In other words, a large number of persons seem to be acquiring the divorce habit, in part, at least, as the result of this new point of view. The significant thing to be remembered is that in practice many persons have changed their attitude toward permanence of marriage while giving lip service to the old ideal of a lifelong union. A few theorists argue that man is a varietist by nature and that he cannot be expected to form a permanent, exclusive union with one mate. Moreover, many modifications of this assumption have been presented by sincere, capable observers.

Whatever may be one's attitude toward the desirability of the ideal of permanence in the marital union, fixed conclusions should not be drawn without first weighing carefully the following considerations: (1) Man needs some intimate, stable source of personal social relations in order to act



effectively in modern social organization. Is there a group which can fill this need better than an intimate, lifelong domestic union based upon confidence and sympathetic understanding? (2) Human beings need contacts involving keen understanding and deep sympathy. It is most unusual for understanding and sympathy to be developed to the highest degree in a temporary union. When satisfactory relations have been established, understanding and sympathy tend to increase with greater permanence. (3) Marriage is the recognized institution for the reproduction and care of children. Stable family life is indispensable to the highest personal development of parent and child. What form of social relationship can be devised which is superior to a permanent marriage union as the foundation for the family unit?

In weighing these considerations, one should recognize that not everybody will be able to achieve the ideal goal, whatever it may be; but waiving these failures, the problem resolves itself into this: Is the most perfect marriage union one in which the husband and wife are united for life, or one in which they accept their relationship as one that may be only temporary?

If one accepts the conclusion that permanence of the marriage union is desirable he may still face many problems in achieving this ideal in his own marital experiences. The selection of a satisfactory mate, the numerous adjustments which must occur in the prolonged course of intimate married life, and the establishment of a family constitute important problems which every person must face and solve if he is to gain the full richness of life which marriage can afford. Unless intimate, harmonious adjustments are effected, adjustments which actually fuse the personalities of husband and wife until they are one in a very real sense, marriage will not have fulfilled its purpose. The breaking of marriage unions brings numerous problems of personal adjustment. Careful students of divorce testify that no matter how unsatisfactory a marriage relation may have been, the severing of it by divorce brings a sequence of personal problems which usually are foreseen, but which are extremely difficult of solution.

### The question of male dominance in marriage

Our culture has in the past recognized man as the head of the house. It will be recalled that during many periods of history his power over the wife was so nearly absolute that legally she had no rights whatsoever. We have accepted a modified form of patriarchal domestic organization varying widely in different areas and among different social classes. Historically, women have been granted progressively greater privileges until they are now free to enter many fields formerly closed to them: they may attend institutions of public learning, they may exercise complete political suffrage, they may enter almost every profession and occupation. Even yet, however, most people regard woman's place as in the home, and her work as that of caring for her husband and children. Man's task, as popularly conceived, is that of supporting and protecting his wife and children.

Perhaps no other feature of marital relations has been subjected to so violent and persistent attacks as that of the subordination of women. Since the beginning of the Woman's Movement, women have increasingly insisted upon being recognized as individuals in their own right with privileges and obligations equal to those of men. Perhaps equal obligations have not been stressed in the same degree as equal rights. What is to be said of this new demand?

Two somewhat different problems are involved in a study of the relative status of man and woman: (1) their relative rights as citizens of the broader social group, and (2) their relative status as husband and wife within the limited marital group. Although the two are more or less interdependent, we shall limit the present discussion to the latter. The problem may be stated as follows: Which is preferable, definite subordination of wife to husband according to the ideal of the past, or equal sharing by husband and wife in the affairs of the home?

The ideals which have become increasingly accepted in Western civilization regarding the worth of the person as such, are compatible only with the idea of marriage as a

union between mature equals. One author has characterized the older conception of marriage, in which woman was subordinated, by the striking statement that the institution of marriage has been responsible for the subjection of more persons to the personal whim of another than has the institution of slavery. It would be impossible to prove the strict accuracy of such a statement; nevertheless it does serve to emphasize the fact that the older idea of the subjection of women is incompatible with the newer conceptions of democracy, equality, and the claims of personality. There is no biological evidence available to show that woman is innately inferior to man, except perhaps in physical size. Since man's social value does not vary directly with his weight, there is no valid reason for subordinating woman to man on the basis of such differences. Unquestionably many wives are physically and mentally superior to their husbands.

Participation in the affairs of marriage on an equal basis does not mean that leadership or division of labor will be lacking, but only that these matters will be regarded as natural adjustments of the personalities involved and not as predetermined by outworn traditions. It is possible that such a division of responsibility can be worked out that in each phase of domestic affairs one of the partners will be accorded the position of authority.

The implications of the equalitarian conception of marriage are numerous and far-reaching, particularly in relation to such questions as work of the wife outside the home, responsibility for rearing the children, and so on. These problems are so involved and complex that they cannot even be outlined in this brief treatment.

### **Companionate marriage**

In considering the question as to whether or not our domestic institutions require remodeling, we must not overlook the challenge to our conventional attitudes toward marriage which is presented by the proponents of companionate marriage. As a deviation from the orthodox view, the so-called companionate idea has provoked widespread discussion.



In both existing and past cultures, marriage has commonly been recognized as the accepted method of establishing a family. This function has been questioned to some extent by the development of the companionate marriage, which recognizes the validity of sex and companionship unions between man and woman without the necessity of accepting responsibility for producing and rearing children. The term "companionate marriage" has been widely misunderstood. Judge Ben Lindsey, one of its foremost champions, regarded it merely as a temporary condition, a mating union between young people who were not yet ready to undertake the responsibility of rearing a family. E. R. Groves has given it the significant name of "arrested family." Usage seems to have changed recently, so that companionate has come to be regarded by many as a more or less permanent marriage relation entered upon with no intention to produce and rear children. Companionate marriage is not to be confused with trial marriage, which has quite a different object.

The argument of the advocates of the companionate runs somewhat as follows: Boys and girls tend to mature physically in their early teens. But with the increased length of educational programs, particularly for the professional classes, they are not financially able to assume the responsibilities of marriage and family life until they are at least twenty-five years old. Under these conditions there is presumably constant danger from an ever-pressing sex urge—either in the form of illicit relations and personal demoralization, or in the form of the repression of this drive and the development of nervous disorders. It is argued, therefore, that it is better that youths should marry early, but postpone the production of offspring until a later period.

The following points, among others, should be weighed in evaluating the companionate as a form of marriage: (1) The relation of "repressed tendencies" to various nervous disorders has been greatly overemphasized. (2) The moral demands of one's religious, domestic, and friendship groups cannot be ignored or violated with impunity. Religious doctrines of the indissolubility of marriage and of the wrongness

of artificial birth control fall within this category. (3) Family life is basic to social organization. The continuance of the group requires a healthy "new generation." The mature parent needs intimate contact with the immature children. (4) The argument that temporary companionate unions tend to become permanent on a basis of nonproduction of children has been advanced against the practice. There are at present no data available by which the merits of this contention may be tested. (5) On the other side of the scale is the argument that the postponement of childbearing by the newly married couple may enable them to make personal adjustments to each other which would be impossible if the wife's energy were devoted, from the beginning, primarily to childbearing. (6) Then, too, some persons who are physically defective have through the companionate an opportunity to form intimate, satisfying relationships without incurring the danger of bringing defective offspring into existence.

Whatever one may think of the proposal of companionate marriage, he should recognize that this is merely a new name for a very old practice. He should also recognize that with the rapid spread of information regarding methods of birth control, the practice has increased rapidly. It is impossible to say to what degree this increase has resulted simply from the sincere desire to postpone the responsibility of parenthood to a more favorable time, and to what degree it represents a selfish, egocentric desire for the gratification of physical impulses. But one thing seems certain—widespread public approval of such a relationship at the present time would open the door for a greater amount of selfish, individual exploitation of another person than would otherwise be possible.

### THE ALTERED POSITION OF CHILDREN AND AGED PARENTS IN THE CONTEMPORARY FAMILY

In the brief history of domestic institutions and in the present discussion of domestic problems reference has been made to the growing repugnance among many married persons toward large families, or even toward having children at all. The interest in companionate marriage is in part a reflection

of this attitude. This trend in domestic behavior offers further evidence of the weakening of old traditions in contemporary family life. An immediate effect is the declining birth rate, now receiving careful attention by students of population, who are beginning to give warning of serious problems ahead if the decline continues. Related to this altered position and importance of children in domestic institutions is the position of aged parents whose care in their declining years was in times past one of the compelling obligations of the adult offspring. The care of the dependent aged is thus becoming still another problem related to changed conditions in our domestic life.

### **The declining birth rate**

Marriage constitutes the approved machinery for regulating the biological reproduction by which succeeding generations are born. The numbers and types of children produced through marriage have far-reaching effects upon the future development, both of separate national groups and of great civilizations. The birth rate—one of the three important factors determining the size of the population (the other two factors being death rate and migration)—may lead to overpopulation, low standards of living, and misery if it becomes too high, and to stagnation and loss of national strength if it drops too low. If marriage performs its proper function within a civilization it will maintain a birth rate consistent with sound population policy.

We may examine briefly the main trend of the birth rate, especially in the United States. Federal statistics on births are not available for years earlier than 1915, but estimates of the birth rate prior to this date have been made by an analysis of the statistics of children of various ages as given in the U. S. census reports. The crude birth rate—i.e. the number of children born each year per 1,000 total population—is shown in the accompanying table. These figures show a rapid and almost unbroken decline in the birth rate throughout the entire period, with the result that, in 1937, the number of children born per 1,000 population was less than one third



as large as that in 1800. Because this rapid decline in birth rate has been accompanied by a corresponding drop in the death rate, the population of the nation has been increasing rapidly even during the last few years. At present, however, the death rate has probably dropped to about its lowest point. In fact, it will probably rise again in the near future due to the increasing proportion of old persons in the population. If the birth rate continues to fall, therefore, the population of the nation will soon cease to grow, if indeed it does not actually decline. Thompson and Whelpton, two careful students of the subject, have predicted that the population of the nation will probably reach its highest peak of about 150 million within the next two generations.

#### BIRTH RATE OF THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

1800—55.0	1870—38.3	1931—18.0
1810—54.3	1880—35.2	1932—17.4
1820—52.8	1890—31.5	1933—16.6
1830—51.4	1900—30.1	1934—17.1
1840—48.3	1910—27.4	1935—16.9
1850—43.3	1920—26.1	1936—16.7
1860—41.4	1930—20.1	1937—17.0

Somewhat similar declines in birth rate have taken place in other nations of the Western world, but at different rates and from various starting levels. The comparative birth rate of the United States and of some other nations in 1937 may be seen in the following table:

#### BIRTH RATES OF SELECTED COUNTRIES—1937<sup>2</sup>

France	14.7
England and Wales	15.3
United States	17.0
Germany	18.8
Poland	24.9
Japan	29.9 (1936)
Mexico	39.9

<sup>1</sup>Figures from 1800 to 1930 show the white birth rate as estimated by Thompson and Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1933), p. 263. Later figures are from *Population Index*, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 44 for years 1931-1935 inclusive; Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 194 for years 1936-1937.

<sup>2</sup>From *Population Index*, July 1938, pp. 194-195.

These varying birth rates so affect the rates of population increase in the world that, unless changes occur, the relative military and economic strength of some of the important nations will be changed materially.

Various reasons may be given for the decline of the birth rate in the United States. A popular reason, frequently cited, is the rapid spread of information concerning methods of birth control. While this influence has, no doubt, been of immediate practical effect, it does not offer a fundamental explanation, for methods of birth control are used only when men and women have the desire to limit the number of their offspring. The more basic and significant explanation lies in changes in certain fundamental attitudes of men and women, especially as related to domestic institutions.

Among the basic attitudes which help to explain the decline in the birth rate the following may be listed: a higher standard of living which seems to demand the limitation of the number of children, the higher standard being desired not only for the selfish comfort of the parents, but for the richer, more complete life of the children; a decline in the economic value of children, who have become an expense rather than a source of income, and who cannot be counted upon as a source of security for old age; the development of individualism, which at times influences individuals to pursue separate careers at the expense of marriage, but which often degenerates into selfishness and makes women and men shrink from the responsibility of bearing and supporting children. The strength and spread of these attitudes in modern life indicate that changes in marriage and the family are occurring. The student should consider them carefully in the light of his own personal development, the welfare of his nation, and the future of Western civilization.

#### **Care of aged parents**

The family has tended to become less permanent under the pressure of modern social life. The extreme mobility of population which resulted from the Industrial Revolution, especially the movement of wage earners from region to region

wherever economic opportunity beckons, has tended to break up the stable neighborhoods in which families took root and in which older and younger generations lived together in intimate enduring contacts. Ties between mature offspring and their aged parents have failed to remain so close and binding as under earlier conditions. Moreover, the increased anonymity of modern populations tends to make the small family of each generation stand more completely upon its own feet, to carve its own niche, and to depend less upon the reputation of its forefathers. Children do not necessarily lose prestige in their community if they neglect aged parents, especially if the latter live at a distance and have different circles of friends.

The weakening of ties between aged parents and their mature offspring has tended to take away from the family its former function of support for dependent parents. No doubt this decay of family function has been an important factor in the development of movements for old-age pensions and annuities. The problem of supporting aged parents still places considerable burden upon the shoulders of many married couples and sometimes results in domestic discord and friction. Under the altered conditions of contemporary family life the imposing of this obligation upon young married persons may, and not infrequently does, break the marriage tie. For this reason the problem of caring for parents who have failed to make adequate provisions for old age is not only a domestic but a community problem as well.

### PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Persons taking an objective view of the evidence on both sides cannot fail to see that marriage and the family, as institutions, still have important functions to perform in society. They may further agree that, so far as modern civilization is concerned, superior merit appears to inhere in the small family unit based upon equalitarian monogamous marriage. After all this has been admitted, however, the fact remains that domestic institutions themselves are not so effective as



thoughtful observers would like to see them. There are many deviations and irregularities in the relations of the sexes which frequently work grave injury to the individual and to society. If the cure is not to destroy domestic institutions, then the pertinent question arises as to whether society, and particularly our own society, can lessen these evils by such means as education and legislation.

### Marriage and divorce laws

Legislation is the technique on which we have pinned our hopes in the past, but too often in vain. Although legislation is an essential means of control in a complex culture, it cannot take the place of the more fundamental program of education. It may be desirable, however, to indicate some of the problems which confront legislators and social workers in the field of domestic affairs.

The confusion of our divorce and marriage laws is the first thing that strikes the attention of the student. There are in the United States forty-nine marriage and divorce codes—a different one for each state and the District of Columbia. Some of the state laws are relatively adequate, while others are almost hopeless in their failure to recognize present-day conditions. Legislators have been turning more attention to marriage than to divorce, on the principle that if the proper marriage unions are formed divorce will tend to take care of itself. But marriage legislation has not been made very effective. It has been examined and analyzed by several competent authorities whose findings reveal a maze of conflicting ideals and aims. Let us summarize some of the striking facts presented by these writers.<sup>1</sup>

Common-law marriage is still legal in many states of the union. This means that persons may become man and wife without obtaining a license and without any formal or civil or religious ceremony, by merely proceeding to live together as man and wife and publicly announcing or admitting such

<sup>1</sup>M. Richmond and F. Hall, *Marriage and the State* (Russell Sage Foundation, 1929). Geoffrey May, *Marriage Laws and Decisions in the United States* (Russell Sage Foundation, 1929).

relationship. The consequence is that there is almost entire lack of public control of these unions. Common-law marriage was inherited from England, but was abolished in that country about the middle of the eighteenth century. We continue to recognize the medieval custom.

The requirements relative to marriage and divorce vary from state to state. Those states which have higher standards for marriage find themselves handicapped in their attempt to enforce the laws by the fact that the neighboring states are not so stringent. It is relatively easy for persons who are not eligible to marry in a state with high standards to cross the line into a neighboring one with low standards and to obtain a license there. Some of the communities where standards are low have thus become renowned as places where marriages can be performed quickly, and with little publicity. It is interesting to note that whenever economic interests become entrenched in such centers, it is difficult to effect a change of state laws to remedy the conditions. Since the federal government still holds to the principle that control of domestic institutions resides in the states, there is little hope of relief from that source. Whether federal legislation might or might not prove satisfactory is, moreover, a debatable question.

Existing provisions for the prevention of the marriage of defectives are not adequate. Two states place no restrictions on marriage; five others permit feeble-minded persons to marry; eight permit the marriage of the insane. Only six states forbid the marriage of persons who are afflicted with venereal disease. Only five states forbid marriage to all three classes, that is, the defective or diseased, the feeble-minded or insane, and venereals. State regulations likewise vary in many other matters, such as the minimum age necessary for marriage, residence, notice of intention to marry, and so on.

Machinery for the enforcement of marriage laws is ordinarily inadequate. The officer who issues the license frequently has no means of checking up on the statements of the persons who apply for the license. Physical and mental examinations are rare; in most states where these are required,

the examinations may be conducted by a quack who will issue a certificate to almost any person upon the payment of a satisfactory fee. In one state the marriage-license clerk must depend upon the sworn statement of the applicant, with the result that feeble-minded, insane, and epileptic persons who are willing to swear that they are eligible to marry may obtain licenses.

Divorce legislation, like marriage legislation, exhibits a wide diversity among the states. The accepted grounds for divorce vary from fourteen in New Hampshire to none in South Carolina. Adultery is the only recognized legal ground for divorce in New York, and is among the most frequently listed legal grounds in many states. Desertion and cruelty are next in importance. Legal grounds are not so important in determining the divorce rates of a community, however, as is the attitude of its judges. A sympathetic judge can find sufficient evidence for granting a divorce decree on almost any grounds, whereas another judge may refuse it regardless of the number of legal grounds available. There is no correlation between the number of legal grounds for divorce in the various states and the divorce rate for those states. If a state has more adequate divorce laws than its neighbors, there will be a considerable movement of people across the border to obtain the advantages of leniency.

#### **The possibility of legislative remedies**

It is quite evident that so long as states are authorized to pass such legislation as they desire for the regulation of domestic relations, there will continue to be a wide variety of conflicting practices. The absence of federal control makes it impossible to work out a systematized plan elastic enough in detail to meet varying needs in the different states of the Union, yet sufficiently unified in fundamentals to protect the high standards of one from the influence of the low standards of another. If such a code could be worked out in accordance with enlightened opinion and in the light of our long experience with the existing state of things, it might well do much toward the elimination of some of our present evils.



Even under favorable conditions, marriage legislation has serious limitations as an effective remedy. While it undoubtedly has value, it fails to solve most of the problems of domestic institutions. The best that can be hoped for from legislation is that defective and diseased persons shall not be allowed to marry, that the taking of sufficient time for thorough consideration of the step shall be made mandatory, that adequate publicity of each marriage shall be given, and that careful records shall be maintained. Legislative measures may also aid, directly or indirectly, in stimulating education. It is upon education rather than legislation that the success of the marital union is likely to rest.

The most significant change in the legal treatment of divorce of the past few decades has been the development of courts of domestic relations. In these courts, applications for divorce are not treated as formal, legalistic problems in which the evidence is considered objectively and the judgment is rendered upon the basis of the facts, regardless of the result. On the contrary, in these special divorce courts each case is regarded as a problem in social adjustment and treated as such. Attempts are made, by means of various techniques of social work, to bring about a satisfactory adjustment that will obviate divorce.

Legal treatment of divorce, while necessary and valuable, is even more restricted in its usefulness to bring about adequate domestic adjustments than is marriage legislation. At best, divorce can be only the last gesture, giving public sanction to the termination of a union which is recognized as unsatisfactory.

### Education

Both within and outside the marriage union, many evils and unhappy experiences which involve relations of the sexes are undoubtedly the result of ignorance.

Romantic love has been handed down as a tradition into modern times, where it sets the pattern for the love life of many adolescents. Unfortunately, however, some of the stabilizing elements of the chivalric pattern have been lost in

the transmission. Not a few of the youth of modern times seem to regard romantic love as the only requisite for a happy marriage. Without any appreciation of the complex nature of the union they are contemplating, with little conception of the nature or scope of the responsibilities which will devolve upon them in their new role, and without any training for the fulfillment of their new duties, they frequently mistake awakening adolescent passion for complete, ideal, romantic love, and embark upon a disastrous matrimonial venture which too often ends in a disillusioning wreck. Unenlightened romantic idealism combined with thoughtless selfishness is probably the immediate source of more unhappiness in present-day married life than any other single factor.

The schools do little to enlighten youth on this important subject. There is great need to provide intelligent and systematic education for prospective husbands and wives regarding the nature and importance of domestic institutions. By this we do not mean merely education in homemaking, although that is important. Nor do we mean education in personal adjustment, although this too is of great importance in removing many of the immediate, concrete causes of marital discord. In addition to these and other practical forms of education for married life, we would emphasize the necessity for education which will spread a knowledge of the fundamental importance of stable domestic institutions, both for the welfare of the group and for the development of personality. A more thorough understanding of the basic part played by social institutions should serve as a healthy antidote for the light-minded way in which many persons approach the more serious affairs of life.

Education of this sort cannot be confined to universities if it is to achieve its real purpose, for too small a percentage of people ever reach a university. The situation would seem to call for action by the proper authorities in providing such instruction outside the regular channels of formal education for those who do not go on to the higher schools. The grammar school, which does touch the great majority of our youth, does not answer the purpose, as there the pupil has

not reached sufficient maturity. The introduction of such information sufficiently early into the life of the maturing human being presents a challenge which is worthy of the best efforts of our educational leadership.

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## EDUCATION IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION

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**E**DUCATION at the present time is usually associated with schools. We commonly think of an educated man as one trained and disciplined in institutions created for the purpose. But in a sense, life is a school; living is education. Experience quickens, broadens, and disciplines the human mind. The degree to which the process goes on is determined by opportunities for varied experience and by the quality of mind itself. A dull mind goes through life like a defective photographic plate that takes on impressions dimly or not at all. When a person systematizes and directs that sort of informal education, we call it self-education and speak of him as a self-educated man. Experience alone is of great importance in the education of the individual—in adjusting him to the demands of social living; but in the present discussion we are not concerned with that kind of education. Education as considered here is a social process directed by the community or by individuals of the community toward the realization of socially accepted values. When so conceived and directed, the activity takes on some degree of organization and finally becomes institutionalized.

### **The functions of education**

In its most fundamental and general sense, education is conceived as the cultural progress of society. Its major

function is the extension, conservation, and transmission of all the cultural values and ideas to succeeding generations, to the end that man may progress in physical, economic, social, and ethical well-being. Stop the educational process and the community would return to barbarism. Thus education in its broadest sense must be regarded as the means or agency for the progress of civilization. Under this broad view the field of education includes all branches of knowledge: the physical and natural sciences, social sciences, techniques, philosophy, religion, mathematics, literature, language, music, and art. As a world heritage these elements of civilization take on a universal interest as objects of study, but within the common heritage the particular culture of the community or the nation acquires emphasis determined by community or national aims and ideals. Thus education may take on a narrower function of furthering the group ideal—in ancient Greece, the highest development of personality; in Germany, of service to the state; in France, of culture in its narrower sense; in America, of citizenship.

The last-mentioned conception of the function of education appears more or less throughout history whenever education becomes a conscious process. The family inducts the plastic child into the group habits and *mores* of his time; it socializes him. The school, or what corresponds to it, takes up and continues the process of social adjustment and makes him still further a sharer in the culture of the group. It goes further and indoctrinates him with group beliefs and loyalties. As a rule, he takes on the common impress of the culture of the community or nation—the cultural biases, as they were designated in an earlier chapter. In Russia today we have the interesting example of a state attempting by education to make over the youth by inculcating habits of thought and social attitudes radically different from those of western Europe.

Within these broader conceptions of the function of education are many variations, but all are related more or less to the larger functions. There is a concept of education as that of individual growth and development—intellectual, social, moral. In this sense, education utilizes subject matter

as the means of growth and development. This is a popular idea of education. It is what is done to or for the individual in order to train him in habits and behavior, to realize achievement and personal satisfaction. Several other notions of education are held. One is that education is mere mastery of subject matter, acquisition of information—that it is identical with erudition. This last view of education had a rather large place in the thinking of men in the past; at present it is giving way to the notions of education set forth above.

### **Education in primitive societies**

The culture of primitive societies is relatively static. They have little or no conception of change and are concerned primarily with the preservation of the *status quo*. Innovations are usually taboo. Mental inertia and superstitions are strong. Primitive education reflects these dominant attitudes and interests. It is conceived as a process of adjusting the individual to the group and of inculcating the elements of its culture that they may be handed down as an exact copy from one generation to another. As a means to these ends, education takes on a twofold character: industrial, or, as we would say today, vocational, in the narrow sense; and religious and moral.

Industrial education aims to train the youth in the simple methods of agriculture, hunting, pottery, implement-making, weaving, and building. As culture advances, these occupations tend to become specialized. The "method" used in passing these skills on to the new generation is that of spontaneous or conscious imitation; that is, education is informal. Moral and religious training is highly regarded in primitive societies as essential to group welfare. Man is ever surrounded by the phenomena of nature—birth and death, growth and decay, thunder and lightning, wind and storm, heat and cold, the sun, the moon, the stars, and at long intervals the extraordinary comet and eclipse of sun or moon. Feelings of awe and fear arise. Man attempts to explain the mysterious phenomena and to adjust himself to them. Beliefs and practices growing out of his experiences develop into a



religion and a code of ethics. Rigid adherence to religious beliefs and the ethical codes is enforced as a means of defense against the destructive forces of nature. Men of superior ability take over the role of interpreter, guide, and leader. In this way a priestly class emerges whose function it is to perform religious ceremonies, to train youth and to initiate them into full membership of the group or society. The priests have the responsibility of inculcating morals and group religious beliefs. Ethical codes, or sets of mores, and conventional religious beliefs seem to have been the most vital part of education in primitive societies.

## EDUCATION DURING CLASSICAL TIMES

### The Greek ideal

The Greeks first gave the world the concept of a liberal education. The rapid expansion of commerce and the development of ideas of democracy forced new problems on the Greeks. Athens had attained to the hegemony of the Greek world; she had become an imperial power. Political power and wealth created a beauty and splendor at Athens which attracted visitors and settlers from all parts of the Greek world. The keen and versatile Athenian was profoundly affected in his customs, thoughts, and ideals by the social, economic, political, and aesthetic influences surrounding him. An Athenian citizen probably had to participate in more activities than any man either before or since. He had to be a trained soldier ready to serve his country in war; he was a voter who might be called upon to voice his decision in the assembly on any question of local, state, or foreign policy; he became eligible for election to the highest public office; he was subject to call for jury duty—an activity requiring a sound knowledge of the law; he might be called to serve as juror to decide the merits of dramatic productions in the theater. Besides, he had his duties and responsibilities as the head of his family; he performed the priestly offices in home and state. And finally he had his own vocation to follow in order to provide for his economic well-being. The Athenian

state demanded versatility in the citizen. His life was colorful, many-sided, filled with a multitude of practical and intellectual interests.

The Greeks attacked their political, ethical, and social problems with enthusiasm. In group life there emerged the problem of freedom for the individual or submission to the authority of the group or state. The conflict between the individual and society was resolved by regarding the state and the individual as identical. The well-being of the individual and of the state was the same thing. The Greek idea of the place and importance of the individual in the state or society is further clarified by contrasting it with the ideas of the relationship between the individual and the state in countries controlled today (1939) by dictators. Under a dictatorship the state is regarded as having an existence apart from the people and an end of its own. Under the latter form of government the individual exists only for the advantage of and for the purposes of the state. In ancient Greece the people were the state. The state was, so to speak, merely a large man with all the traits of an ordinary man. This conception tended to raise man to a place of the highest importance and gave the Greeks a great zest for the activities of life. In formulating an education to prepare them for their manifold activities, they set up a single goal or objective—the “good life”—and formulated a regimen of training designed to lead directly to a realization of that goal. This scheme of education implied the harmonious development of the individual—physically, morally, aesthetically, and intellectually. The conception is that the ultimate end of education is the development of personality—an integrated, balanced personality that enables man to perform all activities, whether political, aesthetic, intellectual, or moral, with ease, efficiency, and pleasure. The achievement of such a personality implied the achievement of the good life.

The Greek conception of education—though at times forgotten or lost sight of—has never lost its meaning. In modern society we still follow the Greek idea that there is a hierarchy of values in education; that there are some “liberal”

subjects which—without immediate practical or economic value—are to be pursued for their own sake, for pure culture. This is the essential basis of the present-day liberal arts college.

The Greeks developed a system of elementary, secondary, and higher schools, formulated a curriculum in the light of the objectives, and perfected methods of instruction which were highly effective. The elementary school inculcated in the child the ethical and social ideals of the state; secondary education trained for citizenship and vocational life; higher education in the schools of philosophy and schools of rhetoric evolved a definite and purposive curriculum for the training of the good citizen.

The school reflects the nature of the social order in which it exists. Educational institutions, like all other institutions, are outgrowths of the needs of society. If they fail to adjust to changes in society they cease to contribute to cultural progress. An institution must change if it is to continue to live. The rise and fall of an institution can be understood only in the light of its social setting. Greek education declined because of changes in the social and political conditions in the city-state. Amid the profound changes brought about by Alexander's conquest of the Greek cities the rich and varied experiences of the Greek citizen mentioned above gradually disappeared.<sup>1</sup> Creative genius lacked stimulus, and the concept of a liberal education changed to one emphasizing the mastery of past knowledge; education was narrowed to a mere study of form, and the work of the schools became bookish and formal.

### **Education among the Romans**

Roman education, like Roman culture generally, underwent important changes as political expansion multiplied Rome's contacts with other civilizations in the Mediterranean world. In the early period of Roman history, Roman life was exceedingly simple; in political affairs the state demanded a rigid loyalty of its citizens, just as the Roman father commanded the strict obedience of the members of his family. These

<sup>1</sup>See pp. 208-209; 220.



features, political and social, dictated the educational objectives, content, and process. The objectives were loyalty and service to the state and reverence for the mores of society. In content, education was limited to the rudiments of learning; in the selection of subject matter the practical arts of agriculture, law, war, and oratory were emphasized; and necessary knowledge in these subjects was imparted to the children through the father by a process of apprenticeship.

With the introduction of Greek culture into Rome about the third century B. C., Roman education was strongly affected. While it may be an exaggeration to say that the motto of the Romans was "Adopt nothing, adapt everything," in a broad sense the statement holds true. Lacking a native literature, the practical Romans borrowed content from the Greeks and adapted it to the needs of Roman life and drew heavily upon Greek educational models. But in this process of borrowing, Roman characteristics asserted themselves. Practical and realistic, the Romans were somewhat suspicious of Greek culture; they took over Greek educational ideas, but they gave them the stamp of Roman character. Education was redefined in terms of practical needs of the times, and it placed chief emphasis on a narrow intellectual and moral training. Physical fitness and training were for military service. Grace and beauty of body and aesthetic education were wholly neglected. The Roman ideal was that of service as soldier, lawyer, or statesman. The rank of orator was the highest position a man could attain in times of peace. But oratory was a practical means to a position of eminence as lawyer or statesman, and was broadly conceived as a preparation for public life and service. Roman education implied a "knowledge of everything important and of all the liberal arts," to the end that the orator might "be armed at all points with the whole panoply of knowledge." In later Roman history the idea of a liberal or general education necessitated an encyclopedic curriculum as the indispensable foundation for a military, legal, or political career.

Education in Rome never reached the high level attained in Athens. A system of secondary schools developed, but the

extent of patronage is obscure. Training was limited chiefly to the field of language and literature. To the core curriculum were added mythology, history, geography, religion, and antiquities. The grammar school training served as a preparation for the rhetoric school.

With the establishment of the imperial government of Rome, preferment in political, legal, and military affairs depended upon the favor of the emperor. The practical ends of education disappeared. Personal ambition was without incentive. Roman education had become rigidly institutionalized. The resulting inertia forced a change in objectives and values. Liberal or general education was made an end in itself. Education became static and sterile. Substance was neglected; artificiality and affectation flourished. Learning was not for life but for school—an objective which was to emerge at various times in later history. Rome left to posterity no fine treatise of education comparable to the *Republic* of Plato. Educational ideals and practices became crystallized; intellectual stagnation was setting in.

The decline of Roman education parallels the slow decay of Roman civilization,<sup>1</sup> for, as stated above, schools and education are intimately related to the social order in which they exist. One detrimental influence on education was the gradual drying up of political activity in the urban centers, as the imperial government drew all political authority and power into its own hands. A second influence in the decline was the rise of the new religion, Christianity. As Christianity grew in the number of its adherents and in influence, a conflict between the old and the new order in religion and in education arose. The nature of that conflict and the final outcome belong to a discussion of medieval education.

## EDUCATION DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

### The fusing of Roman and Christian elements

The medieval world found a system of grammar schools in the cities and towns of imperial Rome and her provinces. The

<sup>1</sup>See p. 263.

school system was in part the fruit of Roman genius for political organization. True, the schools were decadent, and the content was formal and artificial and divorced from social and civic needs; still, it must not be overlooked that the schools of the cities of imperial Rome and her provinces had a definite organization and a technique of education. To revise education and make it a dynamic force in medieval society, it was necessary only to infuse new ideals, new objectives, and a new content into the schools. Christianity furnished the new content, the new objectives and ideals.

Christianity was carried west into Rome during the period of the Empire. Among the early church leaders were many who had been educated in the pagan schools. To spread the new Christian ideals and way of life it was necessary to have leaders; the leadership could be provided only through training, that is, education; the requisite for giving such education was a system of schools. The Christian Fathers formulated a new objective and aim of education, namely the preparation of leaders in church and state. When the Church Fathers turned to the schools for aid in training for Christian leadership a perplexing problem was encountered. How could pagan learning train for Christian life and faith? How could the literature of myths and pagan gods train in doctrines of the new creed? These questions were discussed long and seriously.

The problem was still further complicated in western Europe by reason of the rapid conversion of the barbarians. Carrying pagan learning to recently converted barbarians was fraught with extreme danger to the successful spread of Christianity. Yet the early Church Fathers, imbued with classical learning, hesitated to reject the Roman type of education. In the fourth century the perplexing problem was solved. From this date until the reign of Charlemagne, the official attitude of the Church was a rejection of classical learning, pagan writers, and heathen books. One leader expressed the opinion that it was better to remain in ignorance of classical learning than to be ensnared by its errors. The current of opposition to classical learning ran so strong that



the Church soon definitely turned its back upon the pagan heritage except in instances where the Church could safely borrow to further the new religious ideals and objectives.

### **The character of medieval education**

The result was a new set of objectives of education. For the masses, the aim was the preparation of loyal adherents of the faith for the salvation of their souls in the next world; for the select minority, the aim was to train leaders for the Church, and somewhat later, for all other affairs requiring literacy. A new curriculum was formulated consisting chiefly of a study of the Psalms, church singing, writing, arithmetic, and grammar. In the higher schools a new type of literature adapted to Christian needs was developed; in form it was classical, but it dealt with religious themes. At no time previously were the schools so closely supervised for the purpose of realizing the objectives of education as set up by the Church.

Outside the Church two minor types of education should be noticed in passing. One was the practical education in craftsmanship afforded by the industrial guilds. Through the institution of a system of apprenticeship they provided thorough vocational training to meet the economic needs of burgher society. The other was a type of education contributed by the Age of Chivalry. Chivalric education introduced the military spirit into religion, set up new moral and ethical standards in conduct and human intercourse, both in time of peace and in time of war. Some of the social and moral values of chivalric education still persist in modern society.

### **The rise of the universities**

By the later Middle Ages Christian Europe was dotted by monastery and cathedral schools devoted, in the main, to the services of the Church; that is to say, they were dominated by the idea of realizing the Christian way of life as a preparation for the fuller life of the world to come. In the twelfth

century the medieval system of education was capped by the rise of the universities. Exact dates are difficult to determine. Monarchs and popes vied with one another in founding universities. Records show nineteen universities in the thirteenth century; twenty-five more were founded in the fourteenth; and thirty more in the fifteenth. At the time of the Renaissance some seventy universities existed throughout Europe.

It would be misleading to project the picture of a modern university into the Middle Ages. Then the requisites of a university were only two—a teacher and students. It was merely necessary to obtain a charter from Church or state, conferring legal rights on teachers and students; the *universitas*—a common name for guild—was then ready to operate. Universities took on the universal or international character of the medieval world about them; they drew their faculties and students from all parts of the Christian world. The charters conferred upon the universities political and civil jurisdiction over the students and granted special privileges to the university communities, such as exemption from taxation and military service. The government of the university was democratic in form. The practice of granting degrees was early established, these being at first merely licenses to teach.

The new universities, in their early period, contributed little to change in the aims of education. They taught the conventional subjects of the liberal arts, consisting of grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music; also canon or church law, civil law, and medicine. Commerce, industry, and other practical interests of men were not considered proper matters for university teaching. Although they had arisen largely in response to the remarkable quickening of intellectual life and the intense desire to learn that characterized the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they were at once captured by the medieval religious ideal, still too strong to be overborne by the first advances of the New Learning. The great teacher Abelard (1079–1142), “the acutest thinker of his century,” was master of dialectic or reasoning. He used dialectic “to make clear what the Church believed.

He used reasoning not to destroy belief but to make it intelligible and therefore firm." Other great teachers of the universities were imbued with the same dominating desire to bring the teachings of Christianity based on divine revelation into harmony with reason.

The model or pattern for thinking on the part of the teachers in the medieval universities was derived from the writings on logic by the Greek philosopher Aristotle. His logic or systematic thinking was well suited to the needs of the medieval scholars. Hence university education became intimately associated with the philosophy of Aristotle. Since that part of his philosophy which was called logic was so greatly stressed, university training came to mean, practically, training in logic or reasoning. University life was marked by an intense intellectual activity, but it became stereotyped under the intellectual formulas set by the *scholastics*, as the great university teachers were called. The Aristotelian philosophy of education as training and mental discipline was the accepted point of view. The ultimate object was to find absolute authority.

#### **An evaluation of scholasticism**

The chief characteristics of learning during the Middle Ages from the ninth to the thirteenth century are summed up in the term *scholasticism*. Scholasticism limited its field to a narrow scope or content. It proceeded on the assumption that the Church was in possession of final or ultimate truth. The problem in teaching was to show how the doctrines of the Church were in harmony with reason. The teachers, or *scholastics*, tilled their limited field intensively. The master read the book to the students and disputed. The students wrote and listened; they indulged in no investigation but slavishly wrote down the text as it was read to them.

Scholasticism had its merits and limitations. A balance of accounts shows that on the debit side scholasticism is charged with supersubtle distinctions, with employing verbal quibbles, and with using a ridiculous and incomprehensible jargon. It gave little encouragement to thinking or investigation. It



fostered debate, but the disputants dealt entirely with books, accepting what they found therein and never manifesting a genuine desire to discover new truths. On the credit side of the account may be entered contributions of the highest value. Scholasticism invented a technical language which is indispensable for accuracy in logical and scientific thinking. It stimulated intellectual interests and offered the only real training of the period. It produced keen and subtle minds and prepared the way for training great intellects in later periods. Finally, it initiated the movement which eventually liberated philosophy from theology and aided the cause of human reason against authority.

The conception of medieval education indicated above was given decisive form by Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), an Italian scholastic and one of the greatest figures of the Middle Ages.

### FORCES SHAPING MODERN EDUCATION

In the fourteenth century, the opening period of the Renaissance, currents of thought are discernible which were to gather strength, as the Renaissance wore on, and change the trend in education. With the advance of the modern period, other forces were brought to bear on educational thought and practice. The final result was the stamping of education with the general characteristics that it bears today. It is these influences which we wish to examine briefly.

#### The secularizing of education

The marked expansion in human interests during the Renaissance inevitably resulted in a lack of adjustment between the ideals of medieval education—particularly those of the universities—and the new social needs. For a thousand years men had been trained and prepared for the future world. This limited view of the goal of life gradually lost its relative importance in the minds of men. The otherworldliness of the preceding period gave way to interest in the present world, in man, and in nature. To men's interest in religion were

added other interests in secular areas. Trade developed, bringing with it rapid increase of wealth. Cities grew rapidly in population and wealth, new worlds were discovered, new inventions were made. Power and control which had long been held by the Church were now transferred to secular authorities. To the expansion of material interests and values is to be added expansion in intellectual interests. The recovery of classical culture opened a new world to western Europe. Increased wealth, the recapture of classical culture, and the rapid expansion of knowledge of the contemporary world—all had a tremendous effect on man's scale of values.

During the first two centuries of the Renaissance the new learning did not make its home in the universities. The father of the Renaissance, Petrarch (1304-1374), abandoned the study of law in the university. He caustically criticized the logicians of the universities. He acknowledged the skill of the dialecticians in their own field but insisted that their object was not the discovery of truth but the pleasure derived from prolonged arguments. He cautioned those seeking virtue and truth to "avoid persons of that stripe altogether."

But while scholasticism was going its own way complacently, education was moving forward on a broad front. The new studies made their home at the courts of kings and princes, in the residences of wealthy citizens, in the palaces of Popes, and in the capitols of republics. The richness of life on earth as revealed in classical literature captured the imagination and interest of men who had little enthusiasm for the formal training afforded in the universities. The revival of learning, which had its roots in the recovered ancient culture, laid the foundation for modern secular education. The new forms of culture growing out of the old during the period covering the fourteenth to the sixteenth century nearly span the whole range of modern education. Following is a brief list of the cultural areas which had their origin and earlier development in the period in question: astronomy, mathematics, physics, anatomy, art and architecture, modern law, political science, geography, vernacular literature, and the art of printing. The growth and spread of these new forms of culture was pro-

moted by the establishment of learned societies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The best known of these are the Royal Society of London, the Imperial Academy of Germany, and the Academy of France.

The secular aim of education is well illustrated by the school of Vittorino da Feltre in Italy. This was only one of a number of private schools in Italy which were important centers for the spread of the educational ideals and practices of the Renaissance. Vittorino da Feltre selected from classical literature materials for moral or character education. The same materials were used for training in language, for intellectual training, and for informational content—materials pertaining to science, geography, and history. Da Feltre's school is one of the first on record to require mathematics and music. The physical well-being of pupils was supervised in diet, clothing, and recreation. Games and sports were fostered. He gave some attention to individual differences and to social training in the school community.

Da Feltre's aims reflect the general effect of Renaissance ideals—to broaden the scope and purpose of education. It was thought that the greatest menace to man was ignorance, and that the broad way of enlightenment was to be found in a diligent study of the classics, which revealed the rich and many-sided intellectual life of the ancients.

Only with many misgivings did the universities open their doors to the new learning of the Renaissance.

They held themselves obstinately closed to the new methods long after these had achieved brilliant results outside their walls. When admission was at last grudgingly allowed a few representatives of the new learning, it was accompanied with many petty slights and indignities—inaugural addresses were required to be submitted for examination before delivery, the use of the library was denied, a share in the government of the university was refused, or, as we should say, the right to attend the meetings of the faculty—or no place was given the new studies in the schedule of lecture hours. The Church, so bound up with the scholastic system, came to its defense. Greek was judged an heretical tongue. No one should lecture on the New Testament, it was declared, without a previous theological examination. It was held to be heresy to say that the Greek or Hebrew text reads thus,



or that a knowledge of the original languages is necessary to interpret the Scripture correctly.<sup>1</sup>

The final triumphant invasion of the universities by humanism, as the new learning came to be called, enriched the educational curriculum, but only for a brief hour did it change the spirit of the faculties. A great enthusiasm to extend human knowledge under a spirit of free inquiry was a distinguishing feature of the Renaissance, but with the close of the sixteenth century humanism had passed into a decline. The university teachers of the new learning became as dogmatic as the scholastics had been before them; if the Greek Aristotle had been worshiped by the former, the Roman Virgil was worshiped among the latter. Nor were the later humanistic teachers any more hospitable to new fields of learning. Modern science had made impressive strides during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it was only after a struggle that it made a place for itself in the universities. Only for limited periods and under special circumstances have universities been in the forefront of intellectual movements. Historically, as institutions, they have been conservative, backward-looking, and intolerant of "unorthodox" or unapproved fields of learning.

The admission of humanism to the universities marked another advance in the secularizing of education, since it signalized the divorcing of the universities from the dominating influence of the Church. It meant that they had turned from the formula set up by Aquinas, who measured educational values in terms of theology, to the broader position that all aspects of culture were legitimately a part of their fields of study. The university was coming to be recognized not only as a training ground for the clergy or other servants of the Church, but also as a center reflecting the manifold interests of men living in a modern community. To an increasing degree the universities became thronged by men looking to a career in the professions, in politics, in commerce, and in business generally. With the historical retreat of religion as the primary interest,

<sup>1</sup>George B. Adams, *Civilization During the Middle Ages* (Charles Scribner's Sons, revised edition, 1914), pp. 376-377.

the secularizing of education was inevitable. It was a process by which the schools were brought into adjustment with the society of the modern world.

### **The influence of democracy and industrialism**

The recognition of classical studies by the universities modified the content of higher education, but it is not to be concluded that the triumph of humanism excluded theology as an important subject of study. Nor did it mean that the tight hold of religion upon education generally had been broken. Outside of the universities—and to a degree inside the universities—its influence continued to be dominant. This was particularly true in Catholic countries. The retreat of religion from the schools was slow and hard fought, and the evacuation is by no means complete even now. The fact is but one illustration of the persistence of certain elements of medieval culture in modern society. A second feature in the education of the early modern period was its comparatively limited application. The present ideal of general education had no place in the accepted opinion of the time. While it is not strictly true to say that education was thought of as an accomplishment solely for gentlemen and the aristocracy, yet the tendency was in that direction, particularly in the universities. It was bound to be so, since the society in which education functioned was essentially dominated by the aristocracy. The assault on what we shall call—for want of a better term—the aristocratic conception of education belongs to the nineteenth century, which also witnessed a further reduction of religious influence.

The establishment of popular governments in the nineteenth century introduced new ideas of the function of education. Possessed of political power, the people of a country were now in a position to capture its educational machinery—to a considerable extent at least—and to mold educational aims and methods to meet the needs of the common man as well as of the privileged few. The democratizing of education then began. As the downward broadening of the process went on, national societies came to comprehend more and more clearly

the responsibility of government for providing the facilities necessary to draw the masses into the schools. Once that function of government was accepted, a new ideal, not yet completely realized, emerged—the ideal of free, compulsory education. In some cases the new ideal was not accepted without a long struggle. In England, for example, the idea had long prevailed that education was the responsibility of the family or home, or of private organizations. University and secondary education developed first. Primary education on a national scale did not develop until after 1870, three years after the vote was given to the workers in the towns. The need of educating the new voters was one of the chief arguments for the democratizing of English education.

Along with democratic government came a renewed attack upon the influence of religion in the schools. In France, where religion was still regarded as an ally of monarchy and an enemy of the Republic, governments were fearful of the control by religion of the ideas of the youth, and they made a sustained and successful attack upon Catholic education. In England, attempts were made to break the hold of the Anglican Church by the creation of a nonsectarian national school system. The extremists in the movement failed to have their way, but a compromise measure did create nonsectarian schools as an important feature of the English educational system.

Another powerful force in the shaping of educational aims in the modern world was the Industrial Revolution. Contemporary Western civilization is dominated by machinery, and mechanical power is dependent on science. So far as education is concerned, the result has been not to eliminate the humanities, so long dominant in our schools, but to press humanism into a generally subordinate position and to stress the physical and natural sciences. Another influence in the same direction has arisen through the multiplying of technological schools of all kinds in which the humanities receive little or no attention. But although industrialism brought with it a growing emphasis on science and technological studies, it acted in another direction to retard the democratizing of education. The Industrial Revolution opened the way



for the employment of children. They were sent into the factories, mills, and mines instead of to school. From 1601 to 1834 the Board of Overseers of the Poor had the power to place children of the poor in workhouses and to bind them out to employers as apprentices. The law which governed English practice in dealing with the education of poor children had echoes in colonial Massachusetts and Virginia in legislation affecting educational matters.

### **The influence of nationalism**

Closely allied with effects of democracy and modern industrialism upon educational institutions is the influence of political nationalism. In the late Middle Ages, it will be recalled, education, like certain other features of social activity, took on a more or less universal pattern. Everywhere in western Europe the aims of the Church were the same, and everywhere it set up the same sort of educational machinery to realize its aims. When the universities arose they took on an international character both as to students and faculties. There was one medium of instruction throughout western Europe; that was Latin. With the rise of national monarchies Europe became compartmented into nation-states, and all institutions gradually took on a national coloring. Educational institutions were nationalized along with others. The vernacular came into use as a medium of instruction, and certain characteristic differences arose to set off education in one state from that in another; that is to say, education became more or less national in its character. Thus with the development of national cultures, segregated and guarded from other national cultures by an aggressive political nationalism, education lost much of its cosmopolitan character. It continued to accept the culture of the whole world as its proper field, but each state society introduced as a leading motive the inculcation of the national culture and the national ideals.

At the present time (1939) there is a decided trend in the direction of a narrow nationalism in all countries, in democracies as well as in the newly established dictatorships. This trend is due to various influences. Nationalism, as we

have seen, developed increasing power and influence in the shaping of civilization after the French Revolution. It continued to grow during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The World War gave it a tremendous push. During the war, unity of military effort among the peoples of the warring countries was obtained principally by an intense stimulation of national patriotism. Since the war, the unstable character of the peace and the fears for national security, both political and economic, have continued to foster national fervor. With the rise of dictatorships, national patriotism has been fanned to fanatical heat in the countries affected. The effect on education in all European countries has been marked; in the dictatorships it has narrowed the content of education to conform to Communist, Fascist, or Nazi doctrine and ideals.

### European trends in education

If we look for educational trends in Europe similar to our own, perhaps the most significant we shall find is the movement for the further democratization of education, as it has developed since the World War. The movement is already old in the United States; in Europe the spread of education from the top down—from the classes to the masses—has not been so rapid or so complete as in America. Now there is a strong demand for it in some of the European countries. There is a growing tendency to provide a common elementary education for all children below the secondary school. In England and France there is a demand for increased opportunities for secondary education, with the result that secondary education has expanded notably since the War. In the broadening of educational opportunities and in the present tendency of some of the European countries to provide the same kind of education for all in the elementary stages, Europe is showing educational characteristics similar to our own. It is in the secondary stage that Europe exhibits a marked departure from educational aims and ideals prevailing in the United States, a departure springing primarily from differences in historical background.

Between vocational training and education in the liberal

sense European educational philosophy draws a sharp distinction. In Europe, secondary education is designed for a selected class—an aristocracy, not of birth, however, but of intellect. It aims to give a liberal education to prepare the more able for leadership in the more exacting callings and in service to the national society and to the state. It is frankly recognized that not all youths are capable of receiving a liberal education; and that many lack capacity for able leadership. Consequently, European education provides machinery for selecting the able. Although secondary education in postwar France has been made more democratic through the abolition of fees, entrance to the secondary schools—which prepare for the university—can be gained only upon the basis of examinations. For those who do not qualify or do not choose to attend the secondary school there is offered three years of advanced elementary education between the ages of twelve and eighteen years. Technical training is available for those who choose a vocation. The old narrow curriculum of the secondary schools with emphasis on classical training has recently been liberalized and now affords students a somewhat wider range in choice of studies than formerly. In England secondary education since the War has continued to move along conservative lines. It touches only ten per cent of the school population and still follows the conventional pattern—with some tendency, however, to improve the curriculum, admit more pupils, and modify the examination system.

The most striking alterations in education since the World War have occurred in those countries affected by revolution. German education reflects the radical political, social, and economic changes that have taken place since 1918. Under the Republic established after the War there was a tendency to break away from the rigid control existing up to the time of the War and to turn to a more democratic system in which greater freedom of thought and action would be recognized. Teachers enjoyed more freedom in methods of teaching and in the selection of materials for instruction. Pupils were given larger freedom. The interest of parents was recognized by allowing and encouraging them to visit schools. This demo-



cratic trend was abruptly ended by the Revolution of 1933 and the establishment of the Third Reich. Since that event all educational institutions have been transformed into instruments of propaganda and indoctrination in the political, economic, and social theories of National Socialism. Schools are now the agency for training in the principles of the Nazi party. All recitations begin and end with the national salute. The revised curricular content has been given a narrow nationalistic emphasis. A new subject, *geopolitics*, was invented to give emphasis to "racial" purity based on a concept of "blood and soil." A special type of school, the Adolf Hitler School, was established to train a highly selected group of youth for leadership in the Nazi party. Private schools were abolished. In Russia and Italy education bears a close general resemblance to education in Germany. The aim is narrowly nationalistic, the content is rigidly censored and carefully prescribed. The method is indoctrination in the philosophy and ideas of the Communist or Fascist state.

Postwar conditions have stimulated educational development in Europe along other lines that merit brief mention. First it should be noted that vocational education is more highly developed than in the United States. Dense populations, highly industrialized societies, and the struggle to create economically self-sufficient states have created situations and problems calling for intensive vocational training. A second conspicuous feature is found in the well-developed programs of continuation education for those employed in industry and business. Finally there are to be mentioned the extensive programs for physical education which have been set up for youth. Particularly notable are the results achieved in the physical well-being of the youth in the countries under dictatorships.

This survey of the influences that have shaped modern European education is sufficient to show that it is a child of past cultures. From the ancient civilizations it took its classical studies and its concept of the humanities; from the Middle Ages came the infusion of Christian religious influences that still color educational thought and practice. With the rise of democracy in the nineteenth century, education ac-

quired its broad base. The development of machine industry not only established a secure place for the natural sciences in educational institutions but gave to them a dominance in some respects analogous to that of theology in the Middle Ages. And, finally, political nationalism has infused the education of each country with certain characteristic features of its national life and history.

### CHANGING IDEALS OF EDUCATION THROUGHOUT HISTORY

In our study of the development of education in Western civilization two basic functions are revealed. First, education is a social agency designed to conserve human culture in general and community or national aspects of that culture in particular, and to inculcate the community culture in the individual. The other function of education is to develop the individual as a person to the fullest extent of his powers. The two aims are related; the realization of the one contributes, up to a given point, to the realization of the other. But they may clash. In fact, one of the most persistent problems of education has been to reconcile the conflict between the larger social aim and the narrower individual aim in education.

The reaction to the problem has varied in different cultures. In primitive society the social aim held an exclusive place, that of inculcating the mores of the group. The Athenians exalted the individual and conceived of education as the development of personality. The Spartans and Romans conceived of education in terms of the state. In the Middle Ages, when the Church rose to supreme authority, education was defined in terms of piety, faith, and otherworldliness. Classical learning was denatured or suppressed, and theology was made the main content of education. After a thousand years of practice of Christian living, man's outlook changed, especially so since the expected reward of the millennium did not materialize as had been prophesied. A combination of influences during the closing centuries of the Middle Ages turned man's attention again to the affairs of this world. Education was redefined in terms of social life, its interests, and its needs. Modern society

appears to value the well-being of the group more highly than the culture and achievement of the individual.

Directly and by implication the generalization was made that an institution is justified in its social setting. In classical, medieval, and modern times schools functioned effectively at the time of founding or origin. They continued to be effective agencies of social progress as long as they adjusted content and method to a changing civilization; but, in each instance of a civilized nation, it has been noted that in their later history schools became rigidly institutionalized, that is, they existed for their own ends. Moreover, they became static and sterile and were unable to readjust themselves to new social needs. They ceased to be a dynamic factor in the life of the nation. In some instances the schools continued in existence by reason of inertia until, in a later age, they were readjusted by means of a revitalized curriculum and new methods, and were made to function again as an effective instrument of social progress. In the contemporary world, characterized as it is by a multitude of rapid changes, the problem of adjusting education to social needs is, as we shall presently discover, an exceedingly difficult one.

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## CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN EDUCATION

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**W**HEN IT IS REMEMBERED that the English colonies in America represented English civilization transplanted to new soil, it is not surprising to find that colonial education bore the imprint of English institutions. Where existing English models were adaptable to colonial ideas and aims, they were followed; where no suitable English models were available, the colonists struck out boldly along new educational paths. The earliest colonial universities—Harvard, Yale, William and Mary—were patterned after the old English universities; and when colonists rebelled in some quarters against the dominant position of theology in the colonial universities, they found their models for a more secular type of institution in the secondary schools set up by the dissenters in England. Thus came into existence the famous “academies,” which were to play a notable part in early American education. How American universities, beginning largely as copies of English institutions, developed into their present forms—so completely dissimilar from their English prototypes—forms an interesting chapter in the history of American education. That aspect of the subject we cannot pursue further. For present purposes our interest must be primarily limited to contemporary education and its problems.

It is in elementary and secondary education that a dis-

tinctly national character has been stamped upon American education, for here there was no suitable English pattern to follow. During our colonial period and the early years of the American republic, England had no national system of education. In fact, she did not establish a national system until 1870—and then in imperfect form. During the years in which America was formulating its national policy and laying the foundation for the American educational system, England was ruled by an aristocratic minority who did not regard education as a function of the state and who would have opposed the democratic idea of education as a national calamity. Obviously England was not the place to which to look for educational ideals and principles acceptable to a people who had staked their fortunes on a belief in the worth of the common man and his right to participate in the work of shaping the course for the great adventure in democracy.

### THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

In its fundamentals, the American system of education can be understood only in the light of its historical background. So viewed, it is an objective outgrowth and an expression of the idea of democracy. During the American Revolution, independence and democracy were the ideals around which the colonists rallied, and the successful outcome of that Revolution paved the way for an experiment in democracy on a larger national scale. The conservation and perpetuation of a democratic government obviously depended on an intelligent citizenry. The means for the realization of this objective was a system of education for the masses. The inception of the idea of universal education, however, runs back to a much earlier time than that of the American Revolution. As early as 1647 the democratic spirit of the Massachusetts Bay colony expressed itself in legislative enactments requiring that each community of fifty families or householders should establish an elementary school, and that each community of one hundred families or householders should provide a school capable of preparing pupils to enter the University (Harvard).



These enactments by the legislature of the Massachusetts Bay colony constitute a landmark in the history of American education. In the first place, they are unprecedented in history; they represent an absolutely new departure in educational theory and practice. Secondly, the goal set by the Massachusetts Bay colony became the goal of the American Union, for once the United States was established upon the democratic principle, universal education came to be regarded as the effective means of promoting morality and intelligence among the mass of the people, without which the great experiment in democracy could not hope to succeed. This conception of the proper solution of a fundamental problem of democracy has resulted in a public school system—free, tax-supported, state-controlled, and nonsectarian. America's faith in the saving power of universal education is traditional in our history.

If works are a measure of faith, the American people have furnished ample evidence of faith by their lavish outlay upon education and by the vast educational structure they have built. The ideal of democracy has caused to be set up in the United States a school system which enrolls more pupils and students, taught by more teachers, in more expensive buildings more luxuriously equipped, and at greater cost per student, than any other country in the world's history could boast. It is estimated that at present (1939) there are thirty-three million students enrolled in some kind of school. Approximately nine-tenths of them are devoting full time to study. The remainder are part-time students in extension courses, in evening schools, in classes for adults, and in discussion groups. The total number occupied in study comprise nearly one-fourth of the entire population of the United States. ( Education in the United States is a major industry.

### Stages in the advance of American education

This impressive achievement is the result of sustained effort over a considerable period of American history. As it stands today our educational structure is a product of the fusion of a number of educational philosophies and of successive influences arising from cultural changes in American society. It is only

since the World War that a serious effort has been made to formulate an integrated philosophy of education, to set up clear objectives in relation to current living, and to organize materials in the light of the accepted philosophy and objectives in order that genuine education may be achieved.

There were three distinct points of view regarding schools and education in early American history growing out of the cultural background of the settlers occupying the three geographic areas of colonial America. The New England colonies, settled by English dissenters, regarded education as the responsibility of the state. Early in their history they established a state system of schools. The middle colonies, settled by diverse nationalities, speaking different languages, and professing various faiths and beliefs, were too heterogeneous to coöperate in establishing a single school system. The result was that each cultural group established its own schools to conserve and perpetuate its own language, culture, and religious belief. The result was a system of church or parochial schools. In the southern colonies was found a third notion or concept of education. These colonies, settled by English royalists, reflected the aristocratic English view of education, namely, that education is the responsibility of the family and the home. Hence private education or tutelage became the prevailing type of education for this region. These three competing ideas of schools and education existed side by side for a period of nearly two centuries. The idea of a state system of schools and education gradually gained the ascendancy over the other two ideas and became the dominant type of school for the whole country.

The democratic ideal of education in the United States has two distinct phases. Jeffersonian democracy aimed at political democracy. The common man was to be made literate in order to become an intelligent voter. Political and social control, however, remained in the hands of the upper classes during the first four decades of the existence of the American Republic. Then followed, in the 1830's, a period known as the era of Jacksonian democracy. It was marked by the first rapid expansion of elementary and secondary schools—public,

state-controlled, and tax-supported. This trend is of special significance in the field of secondary education. In 1872, secondary schools gained complete ascendancy over the private academies through a court decision at Kalamazoo, Michigan, which upheld the legality of levying a general property tax for secondary school purposes. By the close of the nineteenth century the United States had established a complete system of schools for the education of the masses—free, public, state-controlled, tax-supported, and nonsectarian.

Higher education in the United States began with the founding of Harvard College in 1636. It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that there was a rapid expansion in this field. It was in this century that private colleges increased most rapidly. Public higher institutions were established early, but it was the enactment of the Morrill Law in 1862 providing federal funds for agricultural and technical colleges that gave the strong impetus to public higher education. Two other significant movements in the democratization of education in the United States were the founding of more than five hundred junior colleges and the establishing of teachers colleges in every state of the union. The last two types are products of the twentieth century.

To the powerful influence of political democracy upon the development of American education was soon added a second influence, which grew out of the industrializing of a hitherto agricultural society. At about the same time when Jacksonian democracy was at high tide the industrial revolution began in the United States. This caused a shift in occupations and modes of living which had far-reaching effects. There was a rapid growth of cities and a great increase in wealth. An urban society engaged in industry and commerce and possessing great wealth demands a higher level and a more diversified kind of education than does an agricultural society. In the clash between an agricultural and an industrial society in 1861-1865, the industrial order emerged victorious. After a short period of recuperation and rehabilitation, there was the decided upward swing in the spread of opportunities in education noted above. One conspicuous feature of this broadening of



educational facilities was an increased emphasis on the teaching of the natural sciences and a widespread growth of schools of technology to supply the demand for trained laboratory technicians and engineers in many fields of industrial life.

The combined influences of all of these forces working together have created in the United States the urge to extend still further educational facilities and opportunities for the masses. Despite the complaints of scattered voices here and there no evidence exists that the American people feel that the goal has been reached. The United States is committed to the ideal that there shall be no artificial limits placed upon education for all the people. This ideal of mass education has carried with it consequences both good and bad.

### **Some consequences of mass education**

The realization of the ideal of democracy involves at least three variable factors. The first variable is the concept of democracy. It is popularly supposed that the government of the United States, as framed in the Federal constitution, has not changed except by amendment since its adoption. The error of the supposition is easily demonstrated. The second variable lies in the nature of the individual member of a democratic society. The extension of Jefferson's "All men are created equal" into phases of human life which Jefferson himself probably did not have in mind has introduced confusion into thinking on education. Jefferson was speaking the language of a notable political theory and not the language of biology or psychology. All men are not created equal in capacity to receive an education. The third variable is a changing society. The founders of American democratic government could not foresee the evolution of an agricultural people into a complex industrial nation.

The American concept of democracy has led to the very laudable aim to carry education to the masses. With universal education as an aim we have no quarrel; what we are interested in is this: Has the democratic ideal led us to follow an unwise course in the process of educating the masses? Many educators believe that it has. They believe that our

mass methods have given us a product that in many cases is more accurately described as "schooling" than as "education"; the result of those methods has been much schooling in the United States but little genuine education.

The nature of the individual to be educated determines the nature and the limits of the educative process. The individuals to be educated vary widely in native ability and in social and cultural backgrounds. The large masses to be educated have caused the schools—by reason of necessity and by reason of failure to distinguish clearly between the educative process and the industrial process—to adopt the methods of mass production in industry. In general, the schools take a variable group of children, expose them to a uniform body of content, and employ uniform methods in teaching them. The results are too frequently unsatisfactory to society.

Our early adoption of a policy of compulsory education created a demand, first for trained leadership, and second for the formulation of socially valid objectives. It is doubtful whether we have met either of these demands adequately. Trained leadership in the highest sense of the word implies more than administrative ability. Obviously it requires effective administrative machinery to handle the masses crowding the schools, and the situation resulted in a rapid development in the field called educational administration. The work of the administrator became professionalized and there was gradually perfected a smooth-working machine for taking care of the armies of pupils and students. But the educational machinery thus made necessary tended to become an end in itself. Schools were reduced to a fixed routine, and tended to become standardized and mechanical. Genuine educational values were all too frequently sacrificed for the sake of a frictionless machine. The evils of lock-step mass education can be corrected only by a reform which will give educational considerations priority over administrative machinery in schools. To realize this objective it will be necessary to train a new type of administrator—a new variety of educational statesman who will understand the true relation of administration to education.

Moreover, mass education with emphasis on mechanical, routine factors, combined with the absence of a sound philosophy of education and a valid program, has resulted in setting up false objectives. Some of these objectives are time-to-be-spent on a subject, ground-to-be-covered, passing marks, or credits. If a student has spent 120 clock hours in recitation or if he has read a prescribed number of pages in a book, or if by an average of high and low marks a passing mark is assigned, the student is given credit. By saving credit coupons until he has accumulated fifteen or sixteen, the high-school student is given a certificate or diploma testifying that the holder has achieved a high-school education. The same procedure is not unknown on the next or college level of the American school system.

#### **Mass education and school organization**

Mass education has affected other important phases of American education. Democracy demands that there shall be equality of opportunity for school attendance. The door to the next higher level shall always be open to all. Hence American education is organized on successive levels. Each stage prepares for admission to the stage next higher. This is in contrast to the European practice of organizing schools on parallel lines after the first three or four years, each continuing over a long period. The short-term institution in the United States can offer only a short-term curriculum, which all too frequently lacks articulation with either preceding or succeeding curricula. In the past twenty years, however, two new school units have been established, namely, a three-year Junior High School and a two-year Junior College. The purpose of these new types of schools is to afford better opportunities for large numbers and to effect a closer articulation between the different levels of education.

The problems of mass education have been increased as a result of the economic depression beginning in 1929. The state has attempted to solve the problem of unemployment by keeping youth in school longer. In many instances youth who had not attended for some time were returned to school.



There is a general tendency to raise the age for exemption from school attendance. In a few states youth must attend school until the age of eighteen unless regularly employed. School population is not only increasing in numbers but is also becoming more heterogeneous in character, thus giving rise to new problems. Differentiation in curriculum or grouping of children for instructional purposes is often difficult or impossible. Unselected masses require a peculiar type of curriculum. To satisfy the needs of the mass it must be broad and shallow; broad to adjust it to the diverse interests (or lack of interest) of the masses, and shallow to adjust it to the level of ability of the less capable. Subject matter is of necessity elementary in character, and is organized and presented to meet the needs of the average group. The heterogeneity of the student body of secondary and higher institutions of learning has made the selection of curricular materials likewise a matter of compromise. The compromise has not produced a high average type of education.

An evaluation of mass education reveals advantages and disadvantages. It has raised the level of schooling to a height never before attained in Western civilization. It has given dignity, confidence, and poise to lower groups, and a degree of drive, optimism, and satisfaction not found elsewhere. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the effect of mass education is leveling; it results in mediocrity. For in mass education superior ability and original and creative genius frequently find inadequate challenge and incentive to work to capacity. The potentialities capable of being released are incalculable; their release is indispensable to a realization of the greatest social and cultural progress: consequently, if superior individuals are undertrained, there is a resultant tremendous waste to society. Cultural progress is retarded. So long as Americans accept the democratic way of life they will demand universal education, but universal education does not demand factory methods of standardization. Adequate provision for the education of the superior individuals in our society is, then, one of the most important problems in American education.

## UTILITARIAN VERSUS CULTURAL EDUCATION

### Utility as a criterion of education

Education may be evaluated by the criterion of culture or of utility. The latter is usually interpreted in terms of money value or returns in form of goods. Beginning with secondary education there is an insistent demand on the part of patrons and students to know the use of a subject of study. The inquirer means: Will this study or subject help me get a better job at a higher wage or salary than I could get without it? Teachers are hard put to it to give an answer that carries weight and conviction in terms other than money or bread-and-butter value. Economic well-being is a legitimate objective, but it is a means and not an end. Utility is practical, immediate, objective, easily judged; hence, it is not difficult to set up utility as the goal or objective of education.

As evidence of this tendency is cited the advance of enrollment in commercial subjects in high school from sixth place in 1922 to fifth place in 1928. Foreign language exchanged places with commercial subjects in that period. The extent to which colleges of liberal arts have acceded to the demands of the utilitarian and professional cannot be definitely measured. The frequent mention of prelegal, premedical, pre-engineering, and various combination curricula leads to a strong suspicion that the older liberal education has turned illiberal, that is, utilitarian and professional. Utilitarian education prepares for performing the work of the world. It consists of training in techniques and in the acquisition of skills to be used in performance. It is education for doing. Utilitarian education is indispensable to society, but it does not meet society's whole demand.

### Culture as a criterion of education

The ideal of culture in education stands in rather sharp opposition to the ideal of utility. In earlier times culture was conceived as the mastery of a definite body of knowledge. This body of knowledge comprised what past time had selected

as of highest worth, and this came to be interpreted in terms of classical literature. One who did not know the classics was not cultured in the original sense of the term. Training in other fields was utilitarian or technical, or professional, hence of lesser value than education in the classics. Contemporary society no longer accepts the old definition. The concept of culture must be redefined and reconciled with present-day life. An eminent scholar reconciles the conflict between the two ideals by defining culture in terms of attitude of mind instead of subject matter. Culture is a personal, subjective quality. The individual who is sympathetic, tolerant, just, and sensitive to higher values is truly cultured, according to this view. An attempt to test this definition by application to definite persons is likely to be unconvincing.

Cultural education cannot be defined in terms of mastery of a definite body of subject matter or in terms of attitudes and sympathies. It must be defined in terms of modern life. The idea is more or less elusive. An attempt at explanation rather than at definition will be made. Culture is a matter of insight, of seeing truth clearly. Culture is background. It is seeing relations, causes, effects as opposed to seeing things or facts. Culture is a possession of clear conceptions of the highest values of life. Culture is the spirit of inquiry and the understanding of the problems and values of the modern age. Cultural education produces leadership—moral, social, civic, religious. Such leadership is the result of clear vision and wisdom. Cultural education enables one to comprehend and synthesize; adjusted to modern, urban, industrial society it will produce the moral and spiritual leadership necessary for continued further progress.

In American education both the cultural and the utilitarian type are recognized. We have secondary schools devoted almost exclusively to cultural aims, and in many of them the standards are high. We also have secondary schools essentially utilitarian in aim and curricula. What, then, is there to be concerned about? The first matter for concern is alluded to above. It is that commercialism—the desire for material rewards—has so deeply invaded our educational institutions



that there is great danger of submerging the spirit and essence of cultural education even while we are doing it outward lip service. The second matter for concern is that, generally speaking, there is no established conviction or appreciation of the need of discriminating between cultural and utilitarian education as an adequate foundation for a satisfactory grade of university work. The result is that many of our universities are invaded by students whose preparation is unsuitable for university education. Here is our reason for the complaint that freshman college work must be done on a level little advanced beyond secondary-school grade.

### EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL NEEDS

Education apart from social needs is largely meaningless. The state or society would hardly be justified in supporting schools to educate its youth unless these schools made some positive contribution to the needs and demands of society. The concept, social needs, must be interpreted in a broad sense. It includes interest in pure scholarship as well as in practical and useful things. Educational institutions are important among those agencies or instruments serving to preserve the well-being of society and to promote its progress. This may involve the reconstruction of society itself. In such a case education should play a significant part. The rebuilding of society involves a study of the cultural heritage of civilization, training in practical affairs for men, and the solution of controversial problems and issues which arise in a dynamic, emergent society. Schools must educate the members of society in order that they may be capable of dealing intelligently with the problems of current life.

#### The role of education in social reconstruction

At present, it is true, there is no complete agreement among educators as to the function of the school in the social order. At the left is a small group who hold that the school is responsible for reconstructing society. At the right is a group who insist that the school has for its chief function the

preparation of youth for living in the existing social order. Neither of these points of view is satisfactory. A new social order should be the product of coöperation among all the institutions of society. The school is one institution among many whose function it is to promote the good of society. It is a question whether the school is contributing as much as it can and should to bring about social improvement. There seems to be abundant evidence that it has not realized its full possibilities in this respect.

Examples of the use of the school to change society are found in several foreign countries. However violently one may disagree with the social, political, and economic philosophy underlying the experiments, it must be admitted that the results of the new educational program of those countries are impressive. Russia is utilizing the schools to transform a backward agricultural nation into a communistic state and an industrial economy. Germany, Italy, and Mexico are using the school as one of the chief instruments for establishing and consolidating a revolutionary political, economic, and cultural order of society. In each of these examples is seen the place of the school and education in a society undergoing a revolutionary change. On the other hand, schools and education can function to prevent revolution in government and in the social order. Schools that are properly adjusted to the society in which they exist are most effective instruments for the promotion of progress by evolution instead of by revolution.

American education intelligently conceived and conducted would at the present time be intensely concerned about the question of its proper contribution to the solution of some of our major problems. Agriculture in the United States is becoming an increasingly serious problem. Trial remedies have failed. Thus the outlook for one of the basic industries is dark. Railroads with their billions of investments are bankrupt or verging on bankruptcy. It is not unthinkable that the inexorable drift of circumstances may thrust the railroads on the government. The relation of production to distribution shows a serious unbalance. American industry

has been geared for production undertaken for profit. Reduced to the simplest form, the problem seems to be whether business shall continue to operate for profit or shall exist for service. The relation of capital and labor presents a thorny problem whose solution is not in sight. In the ranks of labor itself there is raging (1939) a battle of the giant leaders growing out of two divergent philosophies of organized labor. The consumer in America has become a "forgotten man." How to help the consumer is a challenge to education. Technology offers a large field bristling with problems which must be solved if social well-being is to be conserved and furthered. The problem of social security has become a challenge of the deepest seriousness. Its implications for the future of American society are so tremendous that no one can predict its future consequences. In an age boasting of its achievements international relations have descended to a moral level hardly conceivable a generation ago, and have created tensions and strains that must be removed if civilization is to survive. Politics, or emotion, or methods of trial and error offer little hope of solving these problems. It is time for education and science to assume their rightful roles in promoting the well-being of society.

#### **Education for democracy**

Of greater importance than any of the problems just enumerated is the critical situation facing democracy both in the United States and in other parts of the world. A major task of dictators seems to be to convince the world that democracy is a failure. The retreat of democracy in Europe in the face of aggressive, militant dictatorships is cause for the deepest concern on the part of proponents of democracy. Political, civil, and personal liberty and freedom of press, speech, teaching, and conscience have disappeared or have been sharply curtailed during the last twenty years for approximately one-fourth of the population of the world. Dictatorships march ruthlessly on. Democracy itself presents a dilemma. It attempts to rule by ballot. The opponents of democracy use the ballot to achieve antidemocratic ends;



if they lose an election they can always try again until they win. But once democracy loses an election there is no second trial.

Surely, here is a situation in which education should be fully utilized to acquaint youth with the real nature of the dangers to democracy, for no other place offers better opportunities than the school for a rational consideration of the problems involved. Few outside dictatorship countries are likely to question the excellence of democratic principles and ideals. The question is: How far are these principles and ideals being realized in the actual operation of government? The practical problem is how to make democracy function effectively in the face of social demands of a complexity and magnitude perhaps never before faced by the American republic. If democracy is not functioning effectively, American youth should be made intelligently aware of the sources of the difficulty. If there are powerful individuals and groups in the country who corrupt public servants or who pervert government into an instrument for private or group advantage and gain rather than for public welfare, students should know about it. They should also be made acquainted with the facts about Fascism and Communism. They will not be armed to defend democracy if teaching about American government merely defines and idealizes democracy and either ignores other types of government or dogmatically condemns them.

The present state of the world demands that the full implications of democracy be re-examined. Democracy is a way of living—not merely a sentimental attitude expressed in words. It includes much more than the right to vote. It is opposed to control directly or indirectly by blocs or organized pressure groups. Genuine democracy provides for the well-being of the masses—physical, social, economic, and cultural as well as political. Schools, colleges, universities, study and discussion groups, clubs and organizations of citizens should make a non-partisan, unbiased study of democracy in its relation to living. By such education on a broad front the people can make their most effective stand for the perpetuation of democracy.

## OBSTACLES TO EDUCATION AS AN EFFECTIVE FORCE IN SOCIETY

In the preceding section the attempt is made to indicate the nature of the role that education should play in the present disordered state of society. Is education as it exists today fitted to play such a role? An appraisal of American education from this angle of approach will disclose a number of obstacles that stand in the way of a flexible and free-functioning organization of the educational forces of the country. One obstacle to the adjustment of educational institutions to changing social needs is institutional rigidity—a characteristic, unfortunately, of most institutions.

### The danger of educational crystallization

Conservatism is one of the concomitants of age. Fixity and loss of flexibility are characteristics of maturity, whether in plant, or animal, or man. Institutions, customs, habits, and practices tend to become fixed. Human thought tends to become fixed and run in a channel or rut. The human mind ever seeks a place in which to light and be at rest. One of America's leading philosophers has proposed the thesis that thinking occurs only when the mind arrives at a fork in the road and must make a choice. Another philosopher worked out a stimulating lecture entitled "The Trap," based on the biological fact that the living cell sooner or later loses its power of growth and adjustment and becomes incapable of change. It is caught in the trap. The human mind is subject to the same law. Sooner or later, man is caught in the trap. In thought and action man becomes conservative, unable and unwilling to change. Institutions are subject to similar laws.

Medieval schools worked out a content for education, clothed it in the garb of classical language, and conserved education practically unchanged for a thousand years. In the United States, secondary education was obliged to establish a new type of school at intervals of approximately a century to institute a reform in education at the secondary-school level; the American academy, the public high school,

and the reorganized high school—each was the result of a reaction against the content and method of the type of school it supplanted. The present-day large high schools in the United States are for the most part stable, conservative institutions. A wide survey made by a prominent educator shows that eighty-four per cent of the teachers and ninety-three per cent of the principals feel that on the whole the curricula of their high schools are adjusted to the needs of the community. The same investigation shows that a large majority of teachers and principals report that the academic curriculum dominates in the high schools. This curriculum survives largely on account of its traditional, social prestige. Conservatism is responsible for the retention in elementary, secondary, and higher schools of much curricular content of little or no value in modern society. This conservatism of a group of educators was strikingly demonstrated at a national convention in a symposium on the junior high-school curriculum. Most of the speakers assumed the role of propagandists for their subjects. The arguments were those that had been used for decades in justifying the teaching of those subjects. In only a few instances did the speakers show constructive, progressive thinking in curriculum building. It is to this dominating influence of conservatism in secondary education in the United States that we may attribute the slow progress toward reform in high school curricula. A careful student of secondary education says, "The scientific reconstruction of the secondary-school program of studies in the light of a sound social and educational philosophy has not even been attempted."<sup>1</sup>

Educational changes looking to a real adjustment to present-day demands come all too slowly. It is a reflection on educational institutions that reforms are forced from the outside. Due to inertia of teachers, vested interests, and other causes, schools appear to be incapable of reforming themselves. Transforming school systems and individual institutions into dynamic instruments for the improvement of society has

<sup>1</sup>Geo. S. Counts, "The Changing High School Curriculum," *Progressive Education*, Vol. V, No. 4, p. 339.



frequently been the work of laymen. In some instances the reform has been the work of a great leader who was able to break with tradition and escape from the hampering influence of conservatism. Once reform has been effected by capable leaders, whether individual or group, lay or professional, educational institutions become most important agencies for progress. Widespread movements of reform in the colleges of the United States at the present time give promise of a new day in education. Colleges may become real centers of increased activity for the preparation of leaders capable of grappling intelligently with the problems of a changing world.

### **Controversial questions and education**

It is obvious that education can do little to prepare citizens to grapple intelligently with the problems of a civilization in process of rapid change if such problems cannot be freely discussed in the schools. But there is at present sharp difference of opinion on this issue. Some hold that the schools should avoid all debatable questions. The schools, they say, should teach only tested knowledge and truths. At the other extreme are those who advocate the teaching of controversial issues without hesitation or reserve. Such questions, as they affect schools, fall largely into three groups, namely, economic, political and civic, and social and educational. The area of economics affords a number of more or less explosive questions: the New Deal, government in business, the control of corporations, public ownership of public utilities, relations of capital and labor, the licensing of industry, and others. More purely political in their nature are such controversial matters as questions involving patriotism and loyalty, the American constitution, international policies, problems of peace, and controversies over the interpretation of the facts of American history. In the third group are such issues as uniform divorce laws, socialized medicine, and public recreation.

The question of freedom in teaching grows out of the general problem of how to deal with controversial issues. That there is serious and frequent interference with the free-

dom of teaching is shown by Beale in his carefully documented study *Are American Teachers Free?*<sup>1</sup> Limitations are both direct and indirect. Direct control usually takes the form of enactment of laws prohibiting the discussion of certain questions, such, for example, as the so-called "monkey laws" forbidding the teaching of the theory of evolution, and the action of Congress prohibiting the discussion of communism in the schools of Washington, D. C. By the latter law each teacher was required to make oath before he received payment of his salary that he had not taught communism. This extreme law is no longer in force. Another method of control is the requirement by the state of an oath of loyalty as a prerequisite for certification for teaching. In 1935 twenty-two states and the District of Columbia had such measures on their statute books. Beale's study discusses in detail the forces and influences which limit freedom in teaching.

There is need of clear thinking and understanding respecting the handling of debatable questions. The difficulty frequently arises from a failure to distinguish between *teaching* and *advocating* a certain idea or theory. Good teaching which aims at the discovery of truth, development of understanding, and increase of enlightenment is the surest preventive against acceptance of crackpot theories and schemes of government, of economics, of social progress. It is the function of schools and colleges to deal honestly, truthfully, and fearlessly with numerous critical issues in order that democratic institutions may be preserved and the interests of society safeguarded.

Whether or not a teacher may handle a controversial question so that the outcome will be intelligence and understanding depends upon such things as the competence of the teacher to discuss the question intelligently, sincerity in seeking the truth, tolerance or willingness to recognize whatever merit the opposing side may possess, freedom from bias or prejudice, and tact in presenting his views and ideas. That teacher who presents a question in such a manner as to shed light instead of generating heat is likely to enjoy a full measure of freedom.

<sup>1</sup>H. K. Beale, *op. cit.*, Chaps. 18, 19, and 20.

### Education and the state

When government intervenes to limit freedom of teaching by such devices as "loyalty oaths" and "monkey laws," education is confronted by a vital issue. The problem of adjusting education to social needs then becomes involved with the question of the relation of governmental or other outside authority to the schools. If the duty of education to conserve society is interpreted to mean the preservation of the *status quo* with all the vested interests of powerful or privileged groups, that is one thing. But if society is recognized as a dynamic organism, subject to changes of far-reaching character which are constantly producing maladjustments and serious social problems, then the question takes on quite a different meaning. A recent publication<sup>1</sup> sets up the thesis that education should be considered as a long-term investment by the state to insure its perpetuation and to promote its own interests. The state is interested in having a high type of citizenship. Crime must be decreased; poverty must be reduced and eliminated if possible; disease must be conquered. In the final analysis, education is the most effective means for achieving these things, and the state looks to the schools to give the education.

Another question is the extent to which the state may dictate what shall or shall not be taught in the schools. The state is justified in prohibiting schools from *advocating* political theories and doctrines which aim at revolution or the overthrow of the government by violence. The state is not justified in prohibiting teaching which aims only at change in government by peaceful means, as by ballot. Neither is the state justified in legislating on matters that affect only the beliefs of people. Reference is to recent legislation in certain states on the teaching of the doctrine of evolution. "The perpetuity of government is in no way affected by the belief of people on such a matter as biological evolution."

The relations of educational institutions and government are reciprocal. The state owes the institutions adequate

<sup>1</sup>T. H. Briggs, *The Great Investment*, p. 8.



financial support and must provide satisfactory working conditions, such as protection from political interference and non-interference in matters which should be left to the control of the institution. The school owes the state reasonable and adequate returns on the investments by the state. Returns are in the forms of citizenship and leadership capable of "carrying on" for the welfare of the state and society. To those ends the schools should be protected in the necessary freedom to accomplish their social purpose.

### **Propaganda in the schools**

One other form of hindrance to the free functioning of American schools should be indicated. It takes the form of propaganda, usually introduced from outside the schools, by individuals or groups seeking to use the school for some ulterior purpose. The temptation to use educational machinery for propaganda purposes is particularly strong because the general setup lends itself admirably to such purposes. Let it be noted that the schools of the United States constitute a perfect and complete organization for reaching a very large proportion of all the homes in the country. Propagandists therefore turn to them as the most fruitful agency for furthering their special, selfish interests.

Groups and special interests exert tremendous pressure on school boards for the privilege of entering the schools to present pet schemes or hobbies. The entrance of propaganda is sometimes attempted through legislation. In too many instances the movement is successful. Elementary schools have suffered greatly in this respect. Legislation has been passed prescribing "special days" or making time allotments for programs and the teaching of certain things a stated number of minutes per week, or month. These special days and special subjects have encroached on the time of the regular schedule to such an extent as to interfere seriously with the more valuable work of the school. In most instances the material offered by the propagandist is either valueless, or it could be taught equally well or more effectively in connection with the regular curriculum.

Another type of propaganda is the distribution of publicity materials of various sorts in the public schools. The commercial art is excellent; the materials are free. The psychology of the situation is subtle and effective. The children absorb the idea or point of view merely through exposure to it. The plan is effective in achieving the objective of the propagandist. In high school and college propaganda is sometimes introduced by powerful and influential business interests. Bequests, endowments, and donations frequently carry with them the condition of presenting a prescribed theory of economics, social theory, etc. A particularly vicious type of propaganda is the subsidizing of teachers to do research work and then present the findings as the results of pure and independent research, the connection of the researcher with the interest employing him not being disclosed. The seriousness of the problem of this kind of propaganda is indicated by the fact that at a recent meeting of the American Association of University Professors there was adopted a regulation prohibiting any member of the association from accepting from a private corporation or vested interest any honorarium for work done without making public his connections with that corporation or interest.

The demoralizing effect which propaganda may have upon education becomes evident upon reflection. Propaganda, as the word is ordinarily used, refers to a procedure designed to control thought and action to achieve a definite goal or end without disclosing or presenting all the relevant facts and without revealing the true motive of the propagandist. Such a procedure is completely out of harmony with the spirit of true education. Genuine education seeks truth. It considers both sides of a problem or issue. Propaganda is likely to be carried on by the paid agents of special interests; education is carried on by the paid agents of society for the benefit of all.

### **THE IDEAL PRODUCT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS**

The product of the educational process is measured by its service both to society and to the individual. Schools and

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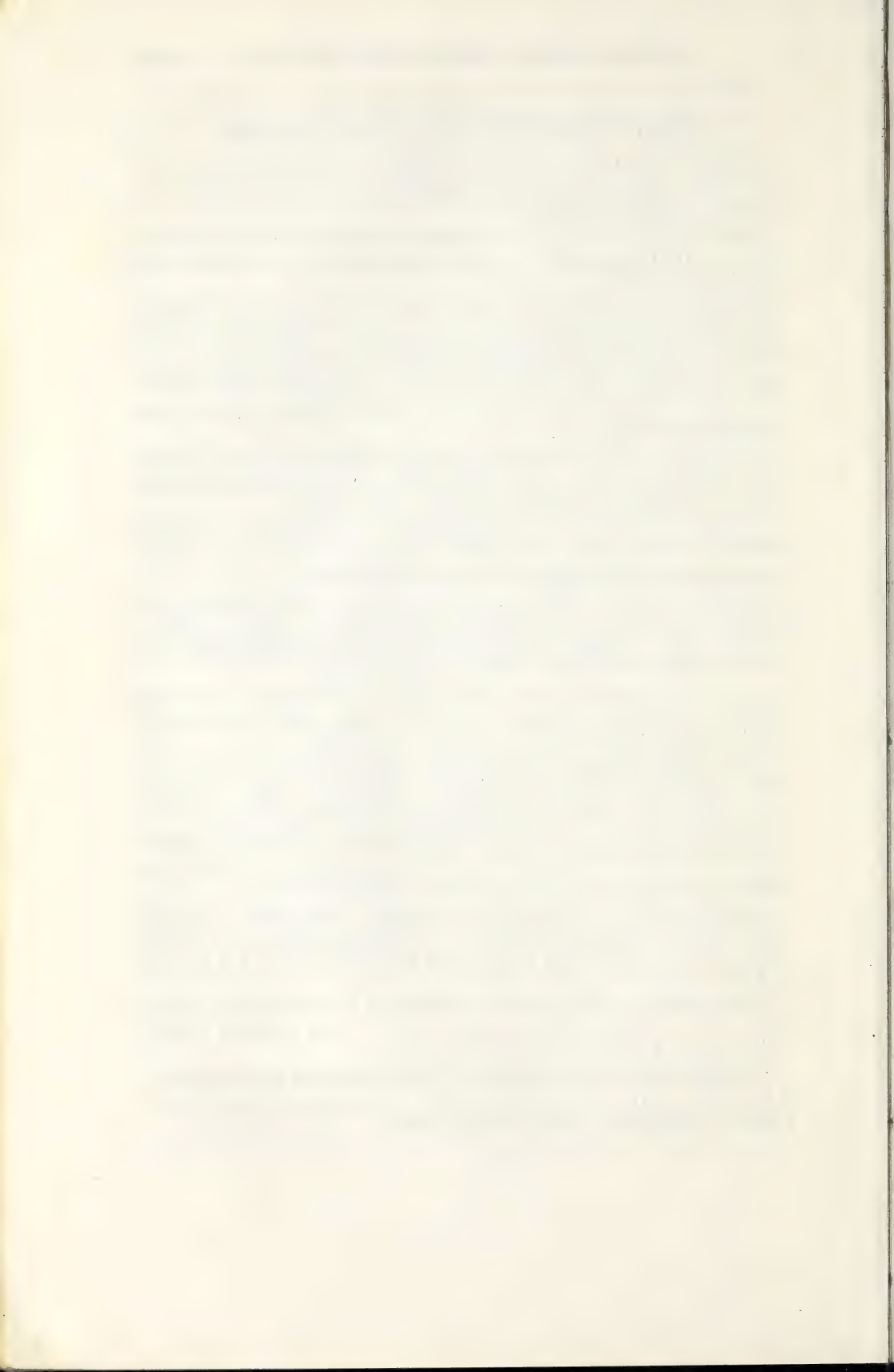
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# SUMMARIES

## SHOWING SALIENT FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

### I. PREHISTORIC CULTURE

*Eolithic Culture c. 1,000,000–100,000 B. C.*

#### TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

Acceptance of this early period as marking the development of man's first culture is based upon the belief that the *eoliths* were artificially fashioned as man's first rude tools. There is evidence also of the beginnings of the use of fire.

*Paleolithic Culture c. 100,000–c. 10,000 B. C.*

#### TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

Materials: stone, flint, bone, shell, wood. Stone and flint tools made by chipping and flaking. Hand ax, drills, awls, bone needles, daggers, spears, harpoons, dart throwers, etc. Continued use of fire.

#### ECONOMIC LIFE

Based on collecting of natural products and hunting. Clothing of animal skins. Use of fire for cooking, warmth, and protection. Habitations: rock shelters and caverns.

#### RELIGION

Burial of utensils with the dead believed to indicate that Paleolithic man had some kind of religious beliefs.

#### THE ARTS

Interest in decorative effects for personal adornment shown in the making of bracelets and necklaces of bone, teeth, and shell. Fairly high point in development of art shown by paintings, engravings, and sculptured figures of animals on cavern walls.

*Neolithic Culture c. 10,000-5,000 B. C.*

## TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

Continued use of stone, flint, bone, shell, wood. Improved technique through development of grinding and polishing. Additions to culture: hewn ax, bow and arrow, pottery, wooden plow, mill for grinding grain, fishhooks and needles of polished bone. New arts: agriculture, domestication of plants and animals, spinning, weaving, navigation by dugouts.

## ECONOMIC LIFE

Collection of natural products supplemented by hunting, fishing, agriculture, and more extensive barter. Improved standard of living by reason of greater abundance and variety of food, and greater comfort through the introduction of spun and woven fabrics for clothing and protection against cold, and through the construction of wooden houses and huts made of woven branches plastered with clay. Development of nomadic and of village economy.

## RELIGION

Wide distribution of megalithic tombs believed to indicate that Neolithic man was deeply concerned about religion and probably had some kind of belief in survival after death.

## THE ARTS

Greater abundance of ornaments still made from shell, bone, and teeth; and in northern Europe, from amber. Pottery, sometimes beautifully decorated, offered a new channel for artistic expression.

**II. THE TRANSITION FROM THE NEOLITHIC TO THE EARLY HISTORIC CULTURES**

## TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

Transition from use of stone and flint to use of metals—copper, bronze, iron, gold, silver—in the making of tools and ornaments. Invention of writing, of the calendar, of devices for measuring and weighing, of the potter's wheel and potter's kiln, of the wheel and wheeled vehicles, and the introduction of animal motive power, and of the ship.

## ECONOMIC LIFE

Transition in some areas from settled village to town economy. The enrichment of economic life by reason of the greater variety and effectiveness of metal tools, the further development of agriculture and handicraft industry, and the increase of trade.

## RELIGION

A period of transition, in the Near East, from animism to polytheism. Man's preoccupation with the mystery of existence after death continues, with increased attention to the construction of lasting tombs as we enter the historic period.

## THE ARTS

Beginning of a transition from the use of Neolithic materials to the use of metals, including gold and silver, in the making of ornaments for personal adornment, and the development of finer craftsmanship. Invention of writing and the calendar opens the way to the beginnings of literature and the chronological recording of events.

## III. THE ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS OF THE NEAR EAST

## TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

Inventions and types of tools of earlier period continue in use. Introduction of metals opens way for more effective tools, greater in number and variety; some stone tools still used. Copper saws for cutting building stone; swords with sharp cutting edges as well as points for thrusting, catapults and other missile-throwing machines for purposes of warfare; circular mill stones, drill braces and drills with fly-weight attachments to keep drill turning, rude devices on principle of the lathe to turn materials being worked; ox-drawn and, later, horse-drawn hoes or plows; water wheels to provide power for mills; increasing size of ships driven by oars or sails; luxurious palaces for the wealthy built of stone or glazed brick, provided with drain pipes of copper and heating systems; great irrigation systems.

## ECONOMIC LIFE

The advance of civilization over the Neolithic is paralleled by a great increase in material wealth. *Agriculture*: basic in sustaining civiliza-



tions of period; land the possession of a few; tilled by peasants as free laborers, tenants, or slaves; extensive irrigation systems developed. *Industry*: handicraft, carried on in household or in shops in towns by specialized craftsmen; slaves largely employed. *Trade*: carried on by ship, boat, and pack-animal; extended over Mediterranean, Red, and Arabian seas; commerce and industry stimulated by introduction of written records and systems of coinage; metal counters used as coins after second millennium, coins in use after fifth century B. C.

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Absolute monarchy the prevailing type of government, regardless of the size of the political unit; authority maintained by military power, ruler supported as a divinity or as one possessing divine attributes; no tendency toward a broadening of the political base of government, i.e., toward democracy. Political history a record of political integration, city-states and territorial kingdoms being drawn together by common interests, or forced into political union by conquest, resulting in enlarged kingdoms or in empires. Laws were harsh, largely a catalogue of offenses and punishments, showing great emphasis on protection of property rights; laws represented to be of divine origin.

### RELIGION

Animism of earlier period gives way to polytheism. Religion a dominant force, particularly in Egypt, influencing all phases of life; priests wielded great power, were sometimes kings. The Near East the cradle of most of the great world religions which influenced Western civilization. Brief trend toward monotheism in Egypt; monotheism given permanent place in civilization by Hebrews.

### THOUGHT

Aside from religious thought and concepts of morality, the ancient Near East made no contributions to philosophy. Science usually bound up with religion and magic; contributions largely in form of applications of science to practical ends, as in calendar, measuring devices, and surveying; astrological data of some value later in development of astronomy; considerable mathematical progress.

### THE ARTS

All the arts pursued largely in the interest and support of religion and royalty. *Literature*: mainly religious, little secular writing; religious epics, hymns, poems, legends, and myths. Literary records made possible by invention of writing—hieroglyphic in Egypt, cuneiform in Meso-

potamia. *Architecture*: shows wide knowledge of art of building—of vault, arch, dome, columns, and piers; main structures were tombs, temples, and palaces; some monumental in size and beautiful in design and craftsmanship. *Sculpture*: animals and mythical creatures executed on gigantic scale, portrait statues, reliefs, and busts.

#### IV. GREEK CIVILIZATION

##### TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

Greeks come into possession of inventions of earlier periods; types of tools, etc., continue in use with improvements in design and an increase in variety for specialized work. High development of craftsmanship revealed in public buildings and in dwellings of the wealthy. In architecture the introduction of marble as building material was a notable addition. With it came marked development of tools for stone-cutting; advance also in metal-working and casting. Expansion of Greek commerce accompanied by advance in shipbuilding and naval skill and by a wide use of coinage; first mint known to us was in Greece.

##### ECONOMIC LIFE

Poverty of natural resources at home not conducive to the development of the great riches and luxury found in the favored areas of the Near East. *Agriculture*: of fundamental importance, particularly in early period; begins in rude villages under equitable system of peasant proprietorship; devoted mainly to production of grains for family consumption; with later developments, land tends to pass out of hands of small farmers into possession of large landholders interested in production of grapes and olives for market, grain being largely supplied from outside sources. *Industry*: at first almost entirely household production, with little specialization and for family use; with growth of urban life, specialized industries carried on in shops to supply local demands supplement household production; town economy emerges. *Commerce*: beginning with simple inter-community trade, commerce becomes extensive as Greeks turn to the sea and plant colonies. Slavery, beginning on small scale in Homeric times, becomes an institution of basic importance in later Greek economy.

##### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Dynamic character of Greek political institutions contrasts with relatively static character of Oriental political institutions. Greek political life closely intertwined with religious beliefs, institutions ascribed to the

gods, patriotism deeply tinged with religious devotion. Political organization begins with monarchy and broadens by stages into democracy aided by codification of law in many of the cities; but the political unit remains the city-state until absorbed into empires of Alexander and Rome; Greeks, unlike Oriental peoples, intensely preoccupied with politics and political thought, pass on to later civilizations an important body of political philosophy.

### RELIGION

By Homeric times religion had lost its animistic elements; polytheism fully developed along with a mythology; religion a powerful force in all phases of Greek life, gradually declining in influence as philosophy slowly introduced more rational views of natural and social phenomena; preoccupation with religion less intense than among Egyptians; religion essentially local, differing somewhat among city-states, and largely civic rather than individual; national religion celebrated at the great Panhellenic festivals, the Olympian, and other games.

### THOUGHT

Greeks preëminent in creative thought, secular as well as religious; made philosophical contributions of the highest importance to civilization; in this respect were in contrast with the peoples of the Near East. In science achieved the highest place reached by the ancient societies; evolved concepts and principles which anticipated some important aspects of modern science; except in medicine, science was largely of the library rather than of the laboratory.

### THE ARTS

In its excellence and its historical importance Greek art matches Greek thought; all the arts bear the impress of religion, subjects from mythology, festivals, Greek games. *Literature*: developed literary forms—epic, lyric, dramatic, oratorical—which served as models for Western civilization and also furnished much of the subject matter of literature; true historical writing also begins with the Greeks. *Architecture*: developed Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders of architecture utilized in building construction ever since, particularly in Roman times and again since the beginning of the Renaissance; important public structures were temples and theaters (outdoor), government buildings comparatively insignificant. *Sculpture*: largely utilized for decorative effects in architecture; independent pieces representing gods, goddesses, heroes, and busts of distinguished Greeks. *Painting*: few specimens preserved. *Pottery*: indicates high development of ceramic art, beautifully proportioned and decorated—mainly in flat design.



## V. ROMAN CIVILIZATION

### TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

No notable additions to man's tool chest by Romans, in some items Roman tools being inferior to those of the Greeks. High level of craftsmanship in building and engineering shown in public buildings, houses of wealthy, aqueducts, roads, and bridges; round arch emphasized as principle of construction. Roman bridges notable; in early bridges used corbelled arches, later round arches of masonry, in spans as wide as eighty feet. Shipbuilding, in the matter of size or length of boats, reached the high point of the ancient world.

### ECONOMIC LIFE

*Agriculture*: dominant throughout Roman period, most highly regarded of gainful occupations, land the basis of social status; subsistence farming in early centuries, land widely distributed among small and larger proprietors who tilled own fields and consumed product; during period of expansion small farmers largely dispossessed, great estates emerge, owned by wealthy class, given over to the production of olives, vines, fruit rather than grains, labor performed by slaves or tenants. *Industry*: manufactured products furnished by household for home use, much household production continuing throughout Roman period; development of town life led to specialized industry carried on in shops mainly for local market, craftsmen largely slaves. *Commerce*: trade and business enterprise generally despised by Roman nobles, largely carried on by Roman knights and conquered peoples—Greeks and Orientals. Towns tended to be economically self-sufficient, little inter-town trade in earlier centuries; imperial expansion meant trade expansion; during imperial period Empire represented essentially a great free-trade area. Slavery of major importance in Roman economic life.

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Beginning as a tribal organization, the Romans next pass under the rule of their conquerors, the Etruscan kings; after expulsion of Etruscans the city-state of Rome emerges as the Roman Republic, with an essentially aristocratic government. Roman Republic extends its sway over Italy, joining conquered city-states with it as allies, and later extends its conquests over Mediterranean world. After century of instability and civil war, beginning in second century B. C., Roman Republic gives way to the Empire, the imperial government becoming increasingly absolute during the last centuries of Roman history. The development of Roman law parallels political development; appears in early Roman

society as unwritten local custom, later takes written form in the Twelve Tablets; then, through the process of adaptation and interpretation, as Roman society grows more complex, the great body of Civil Law is built up; during the same period the "law of the nations" is developed as a means of effecting just settlements in cases involving provincials and aliens. Whole body of Roman law takes final form in the Justinian Code and passes to medieval society through the church.

### RELIGION

In early Rome religion takes form of animism closely bound up with the interests of a simple agricultural society; later undergoes transition from animism to polytheism, mythology borrowed from Greeks, statues and temples erected. As an important function of the family, religion centers in the household; as an official cult, it centers in the city-state where public ceremonies are performed by the priests. During and following Roman expansion, faith in earlier religions declines; new religions from the East are introduced, among them Christianity, which is accepted by many as an individual religious faith. At the same time an imperial cult grows up, partly political in its function, involving the worship of the Emperor. With the adoption of Christianity as the state religion the new faith spreads throughout the Mediterranean world, and with the fall of the Empire in the West is passed on to medieval society.

### THOUGHT

There is a sharp decline in creative thought as one passes from the Greeks to the Romans; such philosophy and science as found lodgment in Roman intellectual life comes from Greek sources. Rome's notable contribution to Western thought lies in the realm of government and law.

### THE ARTS

In art Romans lack fine creative capacity of Greeks; little appreciation and feeling; great numbers of art objects used to adorn Rome brought from Greece as spoils of war. Roman art first influenced by Etruscans, then more strongly by Greeks. *Literature*: Romans excelled here over other achievements in art; literary types and forms, together with much of subject matter, followed Greek models, though not as slavish imitations; Roman literature a valuable contribution to civilization, has exerted strong influence in Western culture. *Architecture*: many structures reveal magnificent achievements in engineering, often monumental in size, with tendency to over-ornamentation; round arch and vault chief constructive feature, Greek column and lintel often added for decorative effects. Conspicuous buildings—basilicas, forums, triumphal arches—reflect strong interests in trade, government and law,

and war; theaters and splendid baths reflect growing wealth and demand for luxury and entertainment; temples take secondary place. *Sculpture*: largely brought in as spoils of war; Roman sculpture inferior, copies of Greek models of decadent, "realistic" art of Hellenistic period; subjects from mythology; also numerous statues and busts of famous Romans.

## VI. CIVILIZATION OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE

### TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

During the first half of the Middle Ages western Europe suffered the loss of certain techniques and forms of craftsmanship; the art of bridgebuilding was temporarily lost, while most of the old Roman bridges were permitted to fall into ruin; there is no evidence of shipbuilding until Viking ships appear in the ninth century. After 1300, bridgebuilding and shipbuilding flourished; arched, masonry bridges were numerous, some with spans surpassing in length those of the Romans; shipbuilding on the Mediterranean revived, Venetian galleys reaching a length of 160 feet. Introduction of the compass and the astrolabe and improvement in the art of mapmaking (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) promoted navigation; ships soon ventured on longer ocean voyages of discovery. The medieval period shows wide regional variations in the use of natural and animal power; in some areas windmills and watermills were in use, also mills operated by donkey power. During Renaissance wind power and water power were used extensively for grinding, sawing, and wood turning. The introduction of gunpowder in the fourteenth century and the use of small arms and artillery provided new sources of power in warfare and supplanted the earlier use of catapults and other contrivances for projecting missiles. The introduction of paper in the twelfth century and the invention of movable, metal type for printing, in the fifteenth, mark a great milestone in human progress.

### ECONOMIC LIFE

With the collapse of Roman power western Europe underwent fundamental changes in economic life: the highly developed industry and commerce of Roman times declined, agricultural economy became dominant, urban life dwindled. *Agriculture*: During first five centuries of the Middle Ages village economy under the manorial system became typical, the organization and practices followed in the system were influenced by Roman traditions, serfdom became widespread while slavery disappeared. *Industry*: On the manor household industry was the rule, specialized



handicrafts were few, inter-village trade was slight. After the tenth century town life was an important feature, industry became increasingly specialized, a guild system of organization appeared. *Commerce:* The growth of towns and cities signalized the expansion of trade and the emergence of town economies. Two chief commercial areas were the Baltic and the Mediterranean, the latter furnishing the great commercial link in the trade with the Near East and, through the Near East, with India and China. During the Renaissance commercial activity reached a high point, money and banking became important adjuncts to economic life, foundations were laid for more luxurious living in favored areas, particularly in the Italian cities. With the great discoveries of the fifteenth century the Mediterranean declined in relative importance and wealth, and nations along the Atlantic seaboard took on steadily increasing significance in the economic life of European society.

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Political thought and institutions took subordinate position during Middle Ages, overshadowed by the Church, which wielded political as well as ecclesiastical power. Eastern half of Roman Empire (Byzantine) continued until the fifteenth century, but in western Europe the highly developed complex political institutions of Romans disintegrated. Stages in political development: (1) The period following the fall of Rome was one of disorder and instability, tribal kingdoms emerged and struggled for supremacy. (2) In this struggle the Franks were victorious and, under Charlemagne, attempted to incorporate Europe into one universal empire in accord with the Roman tradition. The same object was pursued later by German kings, resulting in establishment of Holy Roman Empire. (3) The failure of imperial governments to maintain order and give protection resulted in the establishment of a form of local government called feudalism. The Roman political ideal of a universal state lived on through the Middle Ages, but feudalism was the basis of actual government from the time of the collapse of Charlemagne's Empire. (4) The development of national monarchies, the next stage in political organization, grew out of feudalism, the monarchs themselves being feudal lords who had enlarged their territories and power at the expense of lesser or weaker feudal lords. (5) The growth and power of certain towns and cities enabled them to throw off feudal connections and establish themselves as city-states. The emergence of national monarchies in the later centuries of the Middle Ages signified the decline both of feudalism and of the temporal power of the Church.

### RELIGION

With the emergence of Christianity in the first century and the adoption of Christianity as the state religion of Rome at close of the fourth

century A. D. a significant change came over the life of Western society; various forms of polytheism gradually faded out and the idea of one God and a universal religion took their place. Religion was now based on the conception of a personal relation between God and man, and of the good life as a life devoted not to the prizes of this world but to the supreme happiness of the world to come after death. The new religion soon became universal throughout the Roman Empire. With the collapse of Rome, the Christian Church became dominant in medieval society, and during the Middle Ages was carried over practically all of Europe except in areas conquered by Mohammedans, in the Balkans, and in parts of Spain; Christian areas outside Europe—in northern Africa and the Near East—became Mohammedan. The unity of Christendom was disrupted first by the division into Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox, then by the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.

### THOUGHT

Steady permeation of the medieval mind by Christian ideals produced mental attitudes in marked contrast to those typical in classical civilizations. A "theocentric world" took the place of a "homocentric world." As a general result of the emphasis on religion, leading minds of the early period were drawn into religious channels and turned aside from the intellectual achievements of classical civilization. The cultural stagnation of the first five centuries of the Middle Ages has been characterized as a "Dark Age" in western Europe. In eastern Europe the static Byzantine civilization preserved many of the intellectual treasures of classical culture later to be transmitted to the West. In centers of the Mohammedan world the Arabic mind was vigorously active in philosophy, science, and mathematics; its achievements were later to stimulate the intellectual life of western Europe. Evidences of a quickening of mental activity began to appear as early as the ninth century; by the twelfth a great intellectual awakening was moving in Western society, with the introduction of Greek philosophy, Greek and Arabic sciences and mathematics, and the study of Roman jurisprudence. In the thirteenth century these subjects, along with theology, provided chief topics for speculation and debate. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnessed the expansion of scientific knowledge in several fields, while the early seventeenth century pointed the way to the scientific method for the further extension of knowledge.

### THE ARTS

Medieval art was primarily a form of religious expression, Christianity was its source of inspiration, and notable art was devoted to the promotion of religious and ecclesiastical interests. *Architecture*: The finest examples of medieval architecture are the churches; in western Europe,



first in the Romanesque style, later in the Gothic; in the East, in the Byzantine style. *Sculpture*: Sculpture, along with woodcarving, painting, mosaics, and stained glass work, was an adjunct of church architecture, combining rich decorative effects with religious symbolism. *Music*: Sacred or cult music, mainly vocal, was initiated and cultivated by the Church, and dedicated to its service. Its characteristic form was the Gregorian chant, which reached its highest development in the hymns of the thirteenth century. *Literature*: Medieval literature reveals a break with classical traditions. In the early centuries, Greek and Latin literature was neglected and largely forgotten. Most of manuscripts were in medieval Latin, in prose form, mainly devoted to theology and religious stories. Along with the execution of manuscript books was developed the exquisite art of illumination used for purposes of adornment. *Secular art*: Medieval arts were not exclusively religious; castles, combining the protection of a fortress with living accommodations for nobles and knights, suggest the life of the feudal warrior class; ballads and medieval tales reveal the military and romantic adventures of feudal society; folk songs reflect the traditions of life among the humble. *Renaissance art*: The period is distinguished by a definite return to classical models and styles in architecture, sculpture, and literature. In the latter two, and in painting, classical subject matter likewise became conspicuous. Though Renaissance art shows the decisive effects of secular interests, the influence of religion is still strong, the Church continuing as a leading patron of art.

## VII. MODERN CIVILIZATION

### TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, ETC.

During the seventeenth century there were no fundamental departures from what had gone before, but owing to certain advances and changes during Renaissance, some devices important in Middle Ages lost utility; for example, metal armor, catapults, and other contrivances for projecting missiles were displaced by firearms; "round ships" propelled by wind alone slowly displaced galleys propelled by oars and wind, as oceanic navigation increased. In eighteenth century, with Industrial Revolution, came changes transcending all preceding mechanical progress in historic times; the direct application of animal, wind, and water power to mechanical contrivances utilized in earlier centuries was largely displaced after eighteenth century by three forms of giant mechanical power—steam, electricity, and gas. These forms of power now serve man and society in the production, gathering, and extraction of foods and raw materials; in fabricating raw materials into forms endless in variety; in transporting



goods and people at unbelievable speed over land and water, and through the air; in providing almost instantaneous communication with the remotest points of earth; in the rapid production of books and newspapers; in lifting labor from the hands and backs of millions of people; in promoting health and prolonging life; in furnishing the most deadly instruments for the pursuit of war. This mechanical progress has proceeded along with, and has been dependent upon, the advance of science and technology.

### ECONOMIC LIFE

In general, the period before the Industrial Revolution witnessed a transition from medieval to modern economy, the change being brought to completion during the nineteenth century. *Agriculture*: By the seventeenth century serfdom was gone in England, but medieval methods of cultivation persisted in some parts until well into the nineteenth century. On the Continent, in most areas, both serfdom and medieval methods continued longer. When transition from medieval to modern agriculture was complete, independent landowners took the place of manorial lords, and tenant farmers and agricultural laborers took the place of serfs; "modern" methods largely replaced medieval methods. *Industry*: Guilds, in state of decline in the seventeenth century, disappeared in advanced countries during the eighteenth and gave place to cottage industry or the "putting out" system. After the Industrial Revolution the factory system, with machinery supplanting handicraft, gradually became dominant, first in England, later on the Continent and in the New World. The change marked the rise of the modern capitalistic economy. *Commerce*: With the Commercial Revolution of the sixteenth century came great expansion of trade and the transfer of commercial activity from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean. The Industrial Revolution was a still greater stimulus to trade, for mechanical invention meant larger surpluses of goods for export and improved means of transport. *National economy*: In general, the sixteenth to nineteenth century period witnessed the transfer of control over economic life from the towns to the royal governments, which used their authority to develop national economies by resorting to mercantilism. Mercantilism shifted emphasis from agriculture to industry and commerce and aimed at the creation of an economically self-sufficient state; colonialism, a significant feature of the period, was stimulated by this same desire for economic independence. *Laissez faire*: With the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution came reaction against state regulation of economic life, mercantilism and colonialism were repudiated, laissez faire and free trade became accepted policies of states. *The new mercantilism*: In the last quarter of the nineteenth century laissez faire and indifference to colonies lost favor, and states turned back to a modified mercantilism, to collectivism, and to imperialism. The transformation in economic life summarized in this

paragraph signifies a fundamental change from a comparatively simple economy essentially agricultural to a highly complex agricultural-industrial-commercial economy.

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

At the opening of the seventeenth century feudalism had passed, and city-states and Holy Roman Empire, political relics from the Middle Ages, were in decline; national monarchies, typical of the new age, were in the ascendancy, all under absolute princes who represented themselves as ruling by divine right. In England alone absolutism was challenged, and in 1688 absolutism was overthrown there and parliamentary government, controlled by a property-owning minority, was established. *The challenge to absolutism*: The war for independence in America and the French Revolution in Europe mark the beginning of attack upon absolutism and related institutions and traditions. The attack was preceded by a revolution in ideas embodying the philosophy of liberalism with its emphasis upon democracy and individual liberty. *Popular government*: By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, liberalism had won in western Europe; absolutism had all but disappeared, giving place to constitutional governments providing legal limitations on the exercise of political power and affording some legal protection of individual rights. In Europe, governments commonly took the form of constitutional monarchies; in the New World, of republics. The change signified a shift of political power from the earlier privileged minority to the citizens generally, but the essence of power lodged in the hands of the propertied classes. *Dictatorship*: Disrupting forces and wide discontent generated or aggravated by the World War led to reaction against liberalism and democracy in several countries of Europe, and the establishment of new forms of absolutism in which the individual is strictly subordinated to a glorified state. The contemporary scene finds democratic governments striving to make themselves effective in the face of perplexing social problems within their states and the challenge of aggressive dictatorships outside.

### RELIGION

Religion in the early modern period reflects the first effects of the Protestant Reformation; the universal dominance of the Roman Church in western Europe was now over and society became divided on religious lines into Catholics and Protestants; among Catholics the Greek Church prevailed in eastern Europe, the Roman in western; Protestants were split into Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anglicans, numerous subdivisions appearing along sectarian lines later. In Catholic and Protestant countries alike the church became nationalized, church and state were combined, and the church stripped of its temporal power was largely subordi-



nated to the interests of kings. Religious liberty was rare, each prince seeking to maintain religious uniformity within his realm as a means of effecting greater national stability and security for the throne; hence religious intolerance became the rule, and religious wars prevailed both within and between countries during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. *Liberalism and religion:* In the eighteenth century liberalism set the goal for religious freedom and, as a means to that end, for the separation of church and state. As the nineteenth century wore on, the cause of religious liberty progressively won ground, though the complete separation of church and state failed to be realized in most countries. With the advance of religious tolerance civil disabilities suffered by nonconformists under earlier laws were steadily removed. *Dictatorships and religion:* With the rise of dictatorships in the twentieth century definite hostility to Christianity and to religious liberty has developed in some of the totalitarian states, along with hostility to minority groups within the state, causes of the movement being rooted in political and economic interests. The change is a manifestation of the reaction against liberalism generally, and is portentous of a reversion to religious intolerance.

### THOUGHT

Otherworldliness made theology dominant during the Middle Ages; in the modern age, a growing emphasis on material interests has given precedence to secular thought. The shift in emphasis began with the intellectual awakening of the twelfth century, continued during the Renaissance, was accelerated after the Industrial Revolution, and reached its high point in the twentieth century. In the broad field of secular thought science, politics, and economics have received marked attention. *Science:* Science holds a significant place in modern thought; dealing with the physical universe and its manifestations, it offers richest promises for man's control over his environment and for its exploitation in the interest of man's material progress. The development of the scientific method as an instrument for extending knowledge was an important factor in the advance of science. Since the Industrial Revolution science has been increasingly applied to mechanical invention and technology, and has also contributed to religious skepticism. *Political thought:* During the Middle Ages political institutions occupied an inferior position, and contributions to political thought were slight; during the modern period the state has taken first place, the church has been subordinated, and contributions to political thought have been extensive and varied. *Seventeenth-century thought:* The seventeenth century witnessed the establishment of the modern states-system, the formulation of the theory of state sovereignty, and the work of Grotius, who sought to reconcile sovereignty with international order; while Machiavelli (sixteenth century) furnished a guidebook for kings, releasing them from ethical and



moral considerations in pursuit of the ends of the state. *Eighteenth-century thought*: Political theory of the early modern period served to support the sovereignty of princes, bolster absolutism, and give stability to the existing order of society; political thought in the eighteenth century presented a philosophy of revolt against existing political institutions; the theory of the social contract contradicted the theory of divine right, the principle of popular sovereignty contradicted political absolutism, and the theory of natural rights contradicted prevailing inequalities in individual rights. When the institutions of the Old Order were overthrown, eighteenth-century liberalism furnished principles and theories upon which nineteenth-century political institutions were based. *Dictatorships*: The Soviet system of Russia, the Nazi system of Germany, and the Fascist system of Italy have sought a basis and justification in theories frankly antagonistic to the ideas of liberalism, which are represented as fallacious and conducive to feebleness and inefficiency in the performance of the functions of government. *Economic thought*: During the Middle Ages Christian ideals and ecclesiastical authority discouraged the pursuit of wealth as an aim in life. Growing materialism, particularly the passion for money, steadily broke down the medieval attitude during the Renaissance. By the seventeenth century economic affairs were viewed from an economic rather than a religious point of view. With national monarchies and political absolutism firmly established, political economy became a major concern of kings and their ministers. Economic theories underlying mercantilism furnished an answer to the question as to how kingdoms might become prosperous and kings powerful. The eighteenth century brought a revolt against the theories of mercantilism. With expanding business interests of the bourgeois class, particularly after the Industrial Revolution, laissez faire and free trade became definite features of liberal economic theory. After 1870 theories of economic liberalism were modified by collectivist and socialist thought. In the twentieth century the totalitarian states have rejected the theories and practices of economic liberalism for the theories and practices of comprehensive and strict state control in economic life.

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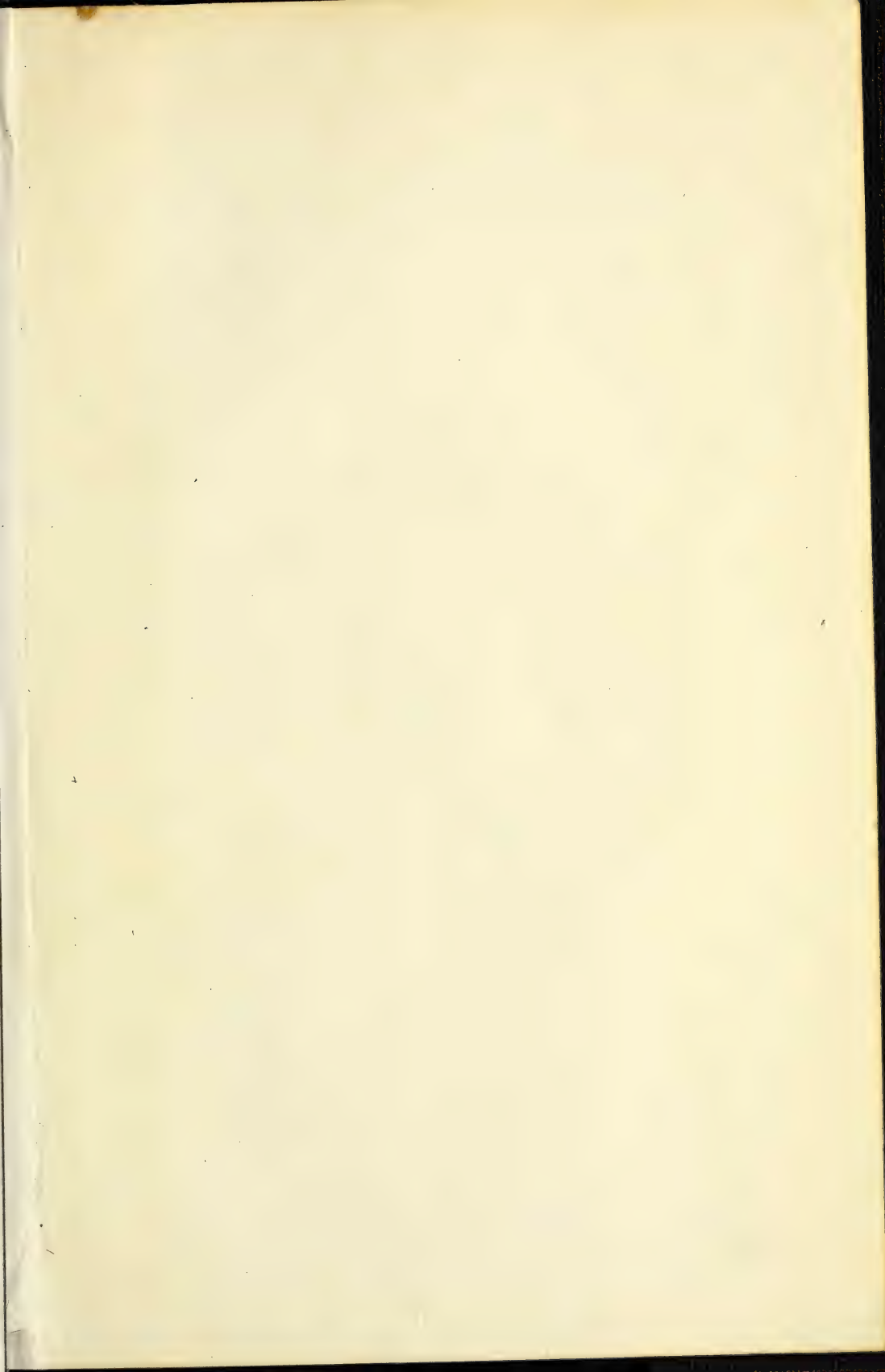
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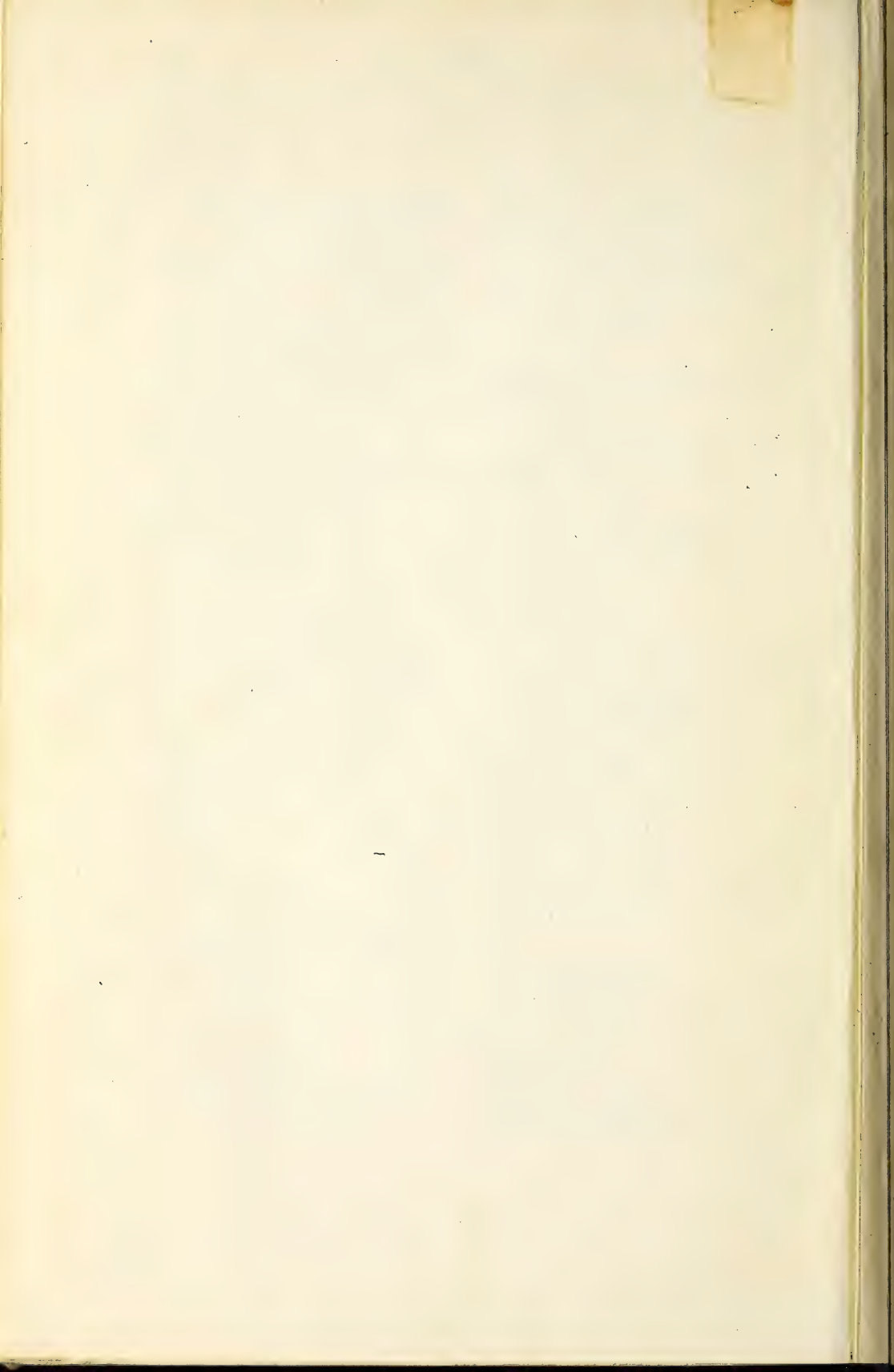
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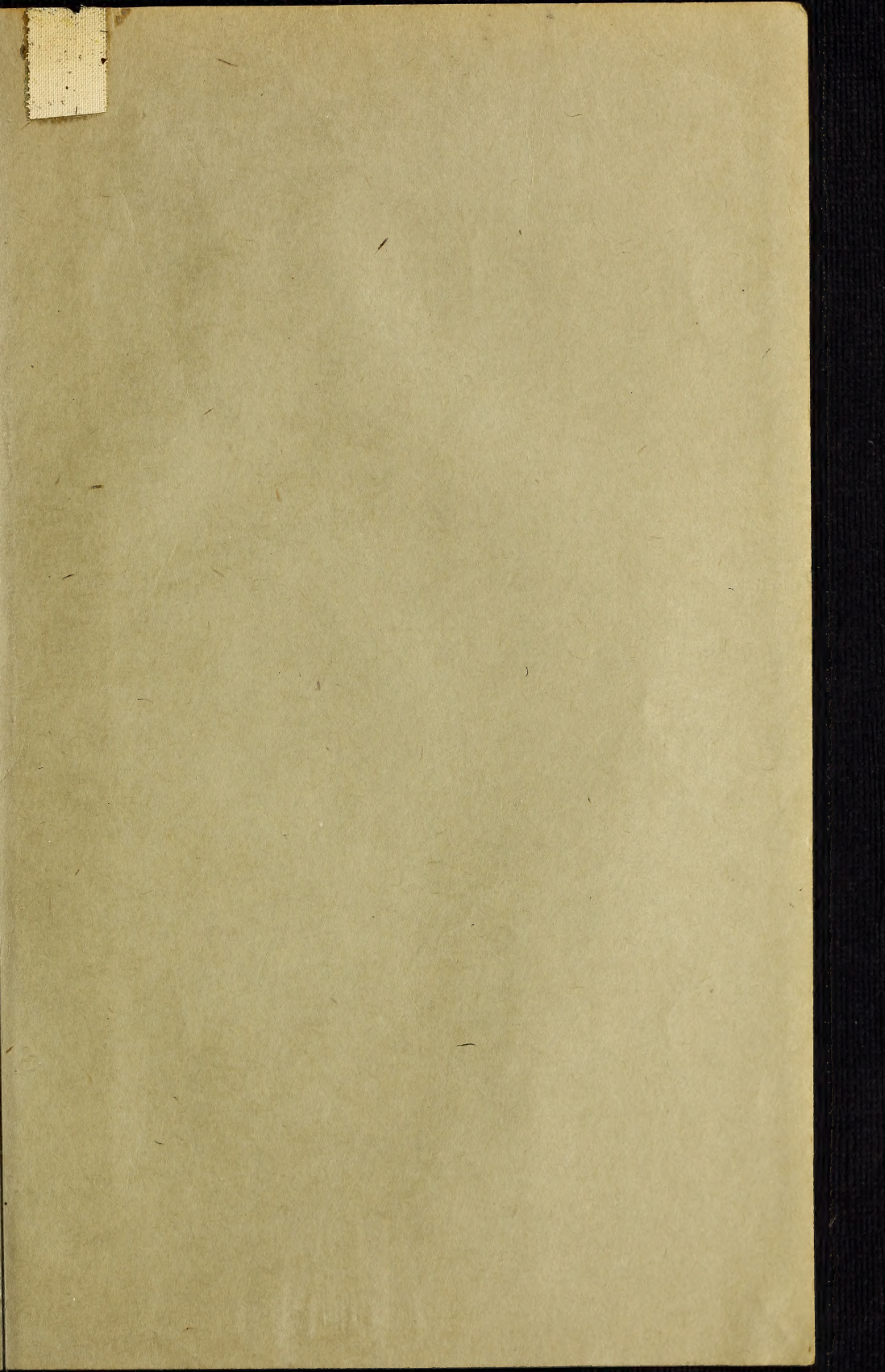


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